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# DIAZ CZAR OF MEXICO

By CARLO DEFORNARO

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# **DIAZ**

## **Czar of Mexico**

**AN ARRAIGNMENT BY CARLO DE FORNARO**

**With an Open Letter to**  
**THEODORE ROOSEVELT**

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**Second Edition**  
(Revised)

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1909

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Of this book the following editions are going to be published :

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In French for	{	France.
	{	Belgium.
In German for	{	Germany.
	{	Switzerland.
	{	Austria.
In Italian	{	Italy.

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When I open a work on practical sociology relating to a nation, without finding in it stringent criticism, since there never existed bodies undeserving of censure in some organ or function, I write down the name of the author *as dithyrambic and fraudulent* and so as not to be caught again I throw the volume into the fire to prevent further harm to the soul of an honest man.

W. TODD, quoted by F. BULNES.

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## Warning.

This is to testify that I, Carlo de Fornaro, author of this pamphlet, do not harbour the design of subverting the Mexican Government, neither do I belong to any revolutionary junta, nor do I plan the overthrow of Porfirio Diaz in order to install myself in his place; that I am neither a "gringo" nor a Mexican and therefore cannot be inventing any sociopolitical, financial and regenerating schemes; that I do not entertain any grudge or ill-will toward the Mexican Government or any individual in Mexico, since during my stay there I was treated with the utmost courtesy, and even with distinction.

I *challenge* and *dare* Porfirio Diaz to permit the free sale of this book in Mexico: for if the accusations herein are baseless, they can easily be laughed away. However Porfirio Diaz will not laugh, but will silently suppress the truth, inasmuch as a government as perverse as his own cloaks its doings with the utmost secrecy. I am perfectly aware of the risks incurred by this venture, now and in the future, but I gladly shoulder all the responsibilities, hoping that in a near day a high minded philanthropist will be induced to create "a society for the prevention of cruelty to Mexicans."

This pamphlet contains the truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God!

Amen.

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## To Theodore Roosevelt.

In a letter addressed to James Creelman, March 7, 1908, thanking him for his article on President Diaz in *Pearson's Magazine*, you affirm that among contemporary statesmen there is no one greater than President Diaz, for he has done for his country everything that a man humanly can do, and that Mr. Creelman has given to the American people the best and most life-like picture that is known up to date of this great President.

Now, I challenge all three statements as erroneous and unjust, since they are based on information superficial, one-sided and incomplete. Mr. Creelman's interview and your letter of thanks to him, through their wide publicity, have done incalculable harm, for an opinion, even if honest and sincere, is harmful if founded on misinformation. Mr. Creelman remained only a few weeks in Mexico—that was superficial; his article spoke through the lips of President Diaz—that was onesided; and his knowledge of the conditions, political as well as historical of Mexico, was incomplete and amateurish, as his article proves. It was my good fortune nearly three years ago to settle in Mexico City, as one of the founders, one of the directors and Sunday Editor of "El Diario", which is now the first paper as far as prestige and a good second as far as circulation in the whole Republic of Mexico. In these years I had the opportunity to observe the development of events from our newspaper office like a doctor who feels the pulse of a patient and I have watched the attitude of the Mexican Government as represented by President Diaz as a curious spectator peeps behind the scenes at the workings of a theatrical company.

I have taken the trouble in these years to read carefully and assiduously the history of Mexico before

President Diaz's rise to power, and also during his régime, through files of forgotten newspapers, pamphlets, and directly through the Mexicans, either friends and admirers of President Diaz, or his enemies and detractors and likewise through those who were indifferent to his political work.

After patient and mature reflection I have come to the following conclusions: That President Diaz has not done all that was *humanly* possible, but all that was *inhumanly* possible for a man to do.

That Mr. Creelman's picture of President Diaz is not the best known representation of him, but it is as the President likes to be represented: as the creator and saviour of modern Mexico.

That in reality he is only a tyrant and a despot in the fullest sense of the word, the creator of a political system more cruel, more diabolical, more profound than Machiavelli ever dreamed of in his "Prince", more subtle and insidious than Loyolá's order of the Jesuits, more bloody and relentless than Abdül Hamid's reign of terror and assassination; more harmful and perverse to Mexico than Caligula's sway over Rome.

President Díaz has never done anything for the Mexican people except in so far as it could help him to rise to power, to wealth and to international prestige.

He has stifled all the patriotic and pure ideals of his people, keeping instead of the substance, a form, an appearance which is only a mockery and an insult to every intelligent person.

Therefore I say that he cannot and must not be called a great statesman, for being essentially personal, his work will logically die with him; that to designate him as a great President is to reverse all our political standards, for then Washington cannot be accounted a great President, and Lincoln is not the greatest, the purest, the highest ideal in statesmanship if this man is considered great.

For President Diaz has sacrificed all the liberties of the Mexican people to his personal ambition, ex-

cepting those of his henchmen, courtesans, favorites and conspirators.

He has throttled and choked the three great bulwarks of any civilized nation: *personal liberty, the freedom of the press and common justice*. For almost a generation President Diaz has kept up the comedy of a democratic, liberal, paternal and patriotic government for the benefit of the unsuspecting civilized nations; his press agents were the foreigners who in exchange for concessions and privileges have given back flatteries, lies, or silence pregnant with meaning; his henchmen, at home and abroad, divided their spoils among themselves like Pashas, and to the rest of the Mexicans were given the bread crumbs from the banquet table full of meat and drink, and if they growled they were kicked into submission. Verily he has fooled all the people some of the time, but he cannot fool all the people all the time.

If your patience is as great as your good-will, read these notes, for they are the result of honest and conscientious research. The writer of these lines has broken away from his financial interests so as to be completely free to tell the truth.

The only claim he makes for this work, is that it shall be the first leaf in the volume for the future history of modern Mexico, which will have to be rewritten by free men.

CARLO DE FORNARO,  
National Arts Club, New York.



## Porfirio 1. Czar of Mexico.

A great man should make great sacrifices and kill his hundred oxen, without knowing whether they would be consumed by Gods and heroes, or whether the flies would eat them.

EMERSON.

Hero of a thousand and one battles, the Prince of Peace, the Superman of Oaxaca, the Saviour and Maker of Modern Mexico, the Cincinnatus of La Noria, the great Lama of Chapultepec, General Porfirio Diaz unconstitutional President of Mexico, now Emperor by Divine Right, your day of reckoning has almost arrived!

Then history will judge his work for good or bad, not by the assistance of his official press agents, his intrigants, his parasites and lackeys; not by the miles of railroads and telegraphs, by the seaports, the public buildings and asphalt roads built on his domain, nor by the battles he won or lost, or the multiple decorations swarming on his proud chest, neither by the army or navy he created, or the myriads of concessions sold to the foreigner, the fictitious prosperity of Mexico and the Peace of the Land, which is only the Peace of the Tomb, the Peace of Varsovia.

He shall be judged by all the liberties he has torn one by one, deliberately, from the Mexicans, by the political ideals he has crushed for the sake of a peace which is beneficial only to the political mafia he has created.

He shall be judged by the Justice he has sand-bagged, in its stead to place puppets and helots of his own; by the thousands of persons imprisoned, rotting in the most infamous of jails; by the thousands of individuals murdered in cold blood without a trial or even a formal accusation, like cattle driven to slaughter to serve as a repast to his ravenous ambition; he shall be judged by his eagerness to terrorize, while despairing

of love and esteem; his perpetual dread of revolt, which proves that his sway is only ephemeral.

He shall come to judgment for the butchery of Vera-Cruz, for the assassinations of General Corona, General Martinez, and General de la Cadena, for the murders of all his rivals, big and small, for the "red day" in Orizaba, for the scores of newspaper men sacrificed to his Great Fear, his terror of Liberty, of Justice and a Square Deal.

It was a great sacrifice, and the holocaust flamed up to the skies and the smoke and the cinders rose up red and grey in the semblance of Porfirio Diaz, Hero of a Thousand and One Battles.

But history shall judge and blow the great Shadow to the four winds.



## A Review of the Life of Pofirio Diaz.

The whole life of Porfirio Diaz can be divided into four distinct periods. The first period stretches from his birth to the age of twenty-four, the second begins when he ran away to join the opposition against Santa Anna, up to 1867, ending with the death of Emperor Maximilian; from 1867 till 1876 was the third, the period of storm and stress which ended by the capture of the presidency. The fourth from 1876 till 1908 is the period of his continuous power with the exception of the interregnum of General Gonzalez, (1880-1884).

### THE FIRST PERIOD.

It is the period of incubation, the budding of the wild flower, the evolution of the disciple of divinity into the student of the law.

This "man of destiny," born to the humblest walk of life in Oaxaca, 1830, from a Spanish father and an Indian mother, rose to the highest power ever attained in his country along the high road of warfare, revolution and anarchy.

But his first footsteps were peaceful, almost commonplace; he was a good son, an industrious scholar and an honest boy.

In the year 1846 the city of Oaxaca had a little war scare. They expected the American soldiers who were advancing to the capital of Mexico to attack Oaxaca. Therefore all the schoolboys enlisted. It was the battalion, "Peor es Nada" ("Worse is Nothing"), mentioned seriously by such a comical name in the local chronicles. (1) Young Porfirio enlisted, too, but unfortunately the comic battalion never went to war.

There is nothing in the first twenty-four years to give an inkling of the crowded events of his future life,

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(1) P. Diaz. xxx, pag. 89.

the almost unattainable ambitions of his dreams, and of all the romantic adventures worthy of a dime novel.

No fortune teller, no prophet foretold him anything and even he himself has admitted that his highest ambition as a boy was to be the colonel of a regiment.

Psychological students of his life have attempted to explain his success by the inherited qualities of the two races, the Spanish and the Mixtec.

Atavism does not explain it, for there are many thousand boys with Mixtec mothers and Spanish fathers who never become anything, not even porters.

The explanation lies within himself: it is the perfect equilibrium between the brain and the will. It is the logical explanation of the successes of the conquerors, statesmen and leaders of men. With a little more intelligence he would have become a successful lawyer, with a little more imagination he might have grown into a militant journalist or a promoter; with too much will power he would have ripened from a revolutionary leader into a bandit chief.

The Don Quixote in every man must be evenly balanced by a Sancho Panza to insure a practical success.

"A commonplace being, attentive and prudent every day of his life, experiences very often the pleasure of triumphing over men with imagination," says Stendhal.

## THE SECOND PERIOD.

This is the quixotic epoch of his life. He was battling for several ideals. He rebelled against the despotism of Santa Anna, against the power of the Church, the arbitrariness of the all-powerful governors, the autocratic "jefes politicos", he fought for the ideals of Hidalgo and Morelos, and "Mexico for the Mexicans", for personal liberty and justice, until his desperate

struggles and his daring were acknowledged by his old teacher in law, Benito Juarez. One fine day (2 Dic. 1854) Porfirio ran away with a bandit named Estaban Aragon, because he had refused to vote for that arch-comedian and despot, Santa Anna, and the police were on his tracks. On that fateful day he found his true vocation. For almost twenty-two years he fought almost unceasingly, in the first thirteen years for a political ideal, in the succeeding nine years for the presidency.

Therefore was he getting a practical lesson in the art of war, in the organization of troops and creation of revolutions.

When still in the midst of the fray the War of the Reform broke out. The liberal party which he had joined emerged victorious against the Church and also lifted the Indian President, B. Juarez, from obscurity into the greatest personality in Mexican history. Then came French intervention. P. Diaz and the liberal generals contended against the disciplined French troops, by guerilla warfare, in open battle, almost naked, hungry, poorly armed, without help from the United States, until at last they drove the French into the sea and brought Maximilian to the executioner. With the Emperor's death, the fate of the Church was sealed.

### THE THIRD PERIOD.

The young general who had fought for so many political ideals was disappointed at the meagre recompense meted out. The thorn of envy began to sting and the patriot sacrificed everything in his mad rush for supreme power. It was a tantalizing and impatient struggle against the impassive and adamant Juarez.

Once he was caught and forced to appear before Juarez, who said to him: "You deserve to be shot like a rebel, but the country takes into consideration the services rendered by you during the War of Interven-

tion. You are very ambitious and you shall be president one of these days, but not while I live."

The first manifestation of Porfirio Diaz's ambition for the Presidency became apparent in the year 1867, when "General Escobedo was laying siege to the town of Queretaro, and there came to him a commission which proposed the formation of a military party whose leadership should be raffled off between Generals Escobedo, Corona and Diaz, the one pointed out by fate to carry the presidency, for it was not equitable, added the commissioners, that Benito Juarez should continue to be President and reap all the benefits of the triumphs when it was they who had achieved them at the expense of their blood and the peril of their lives. General Escobedo replied, saying that he was a soldier and not a politician, that he had fought out of patriotism, not out of ambition and that it sufficed that the French had testified that they would never treat with President Juarez, for him to think him worthy of the Presidency at the hour of success, and that this power should be held in the keeping of the great patriot who had occupied that post in the sad hours of defection and defeat." (1)

This little lesson in patriotism and loyalty made the conspiracy fall through.

From 1867 and for more than nine years General Diaz plotted, conspired against, and resisted the legal and constitutional Government of Mexico under President Juarez and President Lerdo.

This now Prince of Peace-at-any-Price then broke the peace of the land with his proclamations, which today read like satirical pamphlets against his own administration.

He persistently antagonized legal authority, and started rebellions in the south, in the east and the west and invasions from the United States into Mexico. When Gen. Escobedo went after him at the head of the Government troops, Gen. Diaz flunked, disbanded

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(1) Rectificaciones Historicas. F. I. Calderon. Vol. 1. pag. 68.

his rebels, and ran back across the American frontier; it all ended exactly in the same manner as the little rebellion started a few months ago from the border by the Magon Brothers. Then it was Diaz Brothers & Co.

He failed repeatedly, started anew, was caught, escaped, but madly he rushed on as if bitten by the tarantula of ambition, filling the whole country with disorder, unrest, anarchy and disgust.

He was so utterly discredited that well-thinking and serious people compared him to the notorious bandit chief and cazique of Tepic, Manuel Lozada.

This remarkable Indian, savage and cruel, was a strong and interesting character. He had organized a perfect dictatorship, his police and spy system were perfect and he derived the funds for his administration from the custom house of Tepic, which he controlled.

Being ambitious he made a plan, too, a Proclamation, *The liberating Plan of Lozada*.

In a very short time he had organized an army of 8000 Indians, to capture first Guadalajara and then the Presidency.

However, he was defeated at the battle of "La Mojонера" by General Corona. The general impression of the moment was condensed in a phrase uttered by a lawyer who was watching the dust raised by the Indian hordes approaching to attack Guadalajara: "Nothing more was wanted,.....than a third Empire with Lozada I." (1)

A popular phrase was repeated, "Man overboard," to ridicule the failure of General Diaz as a political leader, when on his way from New Orleans to Vera-Cruz (1876) to start the revolution of Tuxtepec, he jumped overboard to save himself from capture by the government troops. This selfsame Prince of Peace who now poses hypocritically as the Protector of the Constitution and Legality, then in the face of popular defeat in three presidential elections, persisted in sub-

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(1) P. Diaz. xxx. pag. 19.

verting public order and hampering the prosperity of his country with his constant rebellions, only to satisfy his personal ambition and insatiable greed.

In 1867 Benito Juarez received 7,422 votes for the presidency.

In 1867, Porfirio Diaz received 2,709 votes for the presidency.

In 1871, B. Juarez received 5,837 votes for the presidency.

In 1871 P. Diaz received 3,555 votes for the presidency. (1)

After the death of Juarez there was another election and he was defeated again. (1872).

Lerdo de Tejada received 9,520 votes for the presidency.

Porfirio Diaz received 604 votes for the presidency.

(2)

General Diaz was responsible for the "Motin" (the Mutiny), the Plan of la Noria, the Plan of Tuxtepec, the Plan of Palo Blanco. This last one resulted in the overthrow of President Lerdo.

Under the heading "Motin" (Mutiny) El Siglo XIX, an opposition paper, printed this news:

"According to our information the Plan consists in assassinating General Alatorre when coming out of the theatre, to proclaim as President, General Porfirio Diaz and impose on the population an enforced loan of \$300,000 under the penalty of pillage." (3)

This mutiny failed, because an hour before the realization of the complot it was denounced by an officer of the same troop.

When the revolutionists ostensibly invited General Diaz to lead another rebellion he answered:

"I resign myself to the sacrifice of my honor and of my life, and if success crowns our efforts, I shall be able to give new and evident proofs that *I do not aspire*

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(1) Aurora y Ocaso. C. Ceballos. pag. 177.

(2) P. Diaz. xxx pag. 14.

(3) Aurora y Ocaso. C. Ceballos. pag. 38.

to the ostentation of Power and that I prefer to it the obscurity of the Home." (1)

This was one of his usual, innumerable political lies, for his personal ambition for power was so keen and terrible that General Luis Mier Y. Teran synthetized admirably the moral state of the Master of the Sword in this phrase: "*Porfirio Diaz or Death.*" (2)

The Plan of La Noria is so called because it was written at the plantation of la Noria owned by General Diaz, who signed this Plan November 1871. It was considered so absurd and preposterous that even an opposition paper of Mexico, "EL SIGLO XIX," said about it, November 16, 1871:

"The Plan of la Noria—this name had been given to a circular recently read by the Minister of the Interior as emanating from General Diaz. We have heard several persons say that it is an apocryphal document and certainly the most effective means of giving weight to public opinion against General Diaz and the revolution he is heading *was to attribute to him a plan so full of political absurdities as the one called the plan of la Noria.*" (3)

One of the first decrees of Lerdo after his election was that of a general amnesty for all the political offenders under arms at that time. (July 27, 1872).

General Diaz considered this amnesty as *degrading* to himself and his fellow revolutionists, as he admitted in a circular dated September 13, 1872, from Chihuahua:

"I thought it opportune that the revolution should accredit to the Government two persons of confidence to enter into frank negotiations which would result in peace and in the substitution of the *degrading* law which purports to call itself an amnesty for another one which should not lower our military dignity and

(1) *Aurora y Ocaso*. C. Ceballos. pag. 208.

(2) *Idem*. pag. 287.

(3) *Rectificaciones Historicas*. P. I. Calderon. Vol. 1. pag. 35.

would not confuse us with the dissidents in the time of the Intervention, as they have apparently tried to do." (1)

On this occasion the rebel chief was outwitted by the President diplomat, who succeeded in showing him up as a traitor to his country. It was therefore natural that peace loving people should have shown their contempt at the unpatriotic behavior of General Diaz by defeating him at the polls at the presidential election of 1872. But a leopard cannot change its spots and Porfirio Diaz in spite of his numerous flatterers and pseudo-admirers is the same traitor to his country now as he was in the nine years of almost intermittent insurrection and sedition.

Sooner or later he has perjured himself against the Constitution, the Republic, the reform laws and against non-reelection; he has broken with the tenets of his party, all the liberal principles he has professed, and all the aspirations of his country.

He yearned to be a Washington and he became a Latin-American Sylla; he wanted to enforce a liberal paternalism and only succeeded in creating a rampant Diazpotism. He hoped to emulate a Napoleon I, and instead followed the footsteps of Caesar Borgia. He expected to rule and he only terrorized. He even imagined that he could deceive history and he only fooled himself.

In his private conversations with strangers and friends he wants to convince himself and others that he always meant to be honest and self-sacrificing, but that circumstances forced his hand the wrong way.

A year ago at an audience given by him to the President of El Diario he said:

"In 1879, when I declared that I was opposed to the reelection for the Presidency, *I was sincere*, but later my friends begged me to remain in power for the good of the country."

From this we must infer, logically, that *he is not sincere now*, for the same friends are begging him at

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(1) P. Diaz. xxx. pag. 21.



every fake re-election, to remain in power for the good of the country.

In the year 1871, in the Plan of la Noria, the proclamation against the government of Juarez, the first lines read:

### TO THE MEXICAN PEOPLE

"The indefinite, forcible and violent re-election of the federal executive has imperilled national institutions."

This comical appeal to the Mexican people from this incipient satrap reminds one of the other Mexican mandarin and traitor, Santa Anna, who used to sign all his bombastic proclamations and letters: "Fatherland and Liberty!" In the famous plan of Tuxtepec reformed at Palo Blanco, March 21, 1876, he proclaimed under his signature:

"Article 2. The same law making the President and the Governors of the States *ineligible* to the same position will be maintained, this being a measure of constitutional reform which we agree to sustain by all the legal means afforded to us by the Constitution."

Again on September 16, 1879, President P. Diaz made this declaration in Congress:

"It is not seasonable for the executive to express his opinion on this matter, but I must solemnly protest before Congress that *I shall never* sanction a candidacy for re-election, because even if this was not forbidden by our code *I shall always* respect the principles from which emanated the revolution initiated in Tuxtepec."  
(1)

Every four years or so the old fox Porfirio passes the word among his sycophants to disseminate the rumor that the President is going to relinquish his power, that he is tired and old and that he wants to retire to private life.

Then crowds of his friends, the friends of friendship, officially and unofficially start pilgrimages to

(1) Dario Oficial. 16 Sep. 1879. Mexico.

Chapultepec or to the Palace and beg him, petition him, entreat him to stay for another term, just for the good of the country. And old Sly Boots, with tears of gratitude in his eyes, sacrifices himself because the Nation wills it.

"When a ruler says: 'I want to relinquish Power, but if the nation demands more sacrifices, I shall continue to sacrifice myself', this must be interpreted as meaning: 'I have not the slightest intention of giving up power, and those interested in my not relinquishing it must take, even if in a ridiculous manner, the name of the Nation, so that this one should appear to entreat me not to forsake her.'

"This couplet has been sung in every century, by all the ambitious ones and has been used as a joke for farces, comic operas and funny papers." (1)

At the approach of the presidential election of 1876, the ever-ready Porfirio initiated another revolution.

One of the accusations of the revolutionists against the Government was: "That public suffrage had been converted into a farce, because the President and his friends by every illegal means, put into public places those whom they call "official candidates" rejecting all the independent citizens." (2)

The revolutionists did not wait until the term of Lerdo was over, which would have been in November 30, 1876.

General Diaz gathered 5000 men and was met by General Alatorre with 3000 men near the Hacienda of Tecuac. The battle was a draw, for both generals were afraid of each other.

Luckily for General Diaz the day was saved by the timely arrival of General Gonzalez, who rushed like a whirlwind against the enemy and thus the battle of Tecuac was won.

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(1) El Verdadero Juarez. F. Bulnes. pag. 668.

(2) Plan de Tuxtepec reformado en Palo Blanco.

The total number of deaths on both sides was ninety-five.

After this rout President Lerdo, instead of fighting, packed his trunks and ran away to the United States.

The only remnant of authority left in Mexico at the flight of the legal executive was José Maria Iglesias, one of the triumvirs of the liberal government during French Intervention.

Mr. Iglesias was a pure, honest patriot of the Catonian type.

He was the President of the Supreme Court when Lerdo left and as such he was constitutionally the president *ad interim*.

On this subject the Plan of Tuxtepec said:

"Article 60. The Executive Power, without any attribution excepting the administrative, shall be deposited, while elections are taking place, in the person of the President of the Supreme Court of Justice or the person of the magistrate discharging this function."

Mr. Iglesias went to Queretaro with his government and while there entered into negotiations with General Diaz. The parley took place by wire between Iglesias and Justo Benitez, the representative of Diaz.

Benitez wired among other things:

"The unavoidable basis of all settlement must be the Plan of Tuxtepec reformed in Palo Blanco as the genuine expression of the national will. Do you accept it?"

And Iglesias answered: "There being no vacillation on my part on such a capital point, I do not, nor must I accept the basis which you qualify as unavoidable. Everything which tends to divorce from the Constitution of 1857, shall be declined by me, who am the only representative of legality." (1)

One of the conditions imposed by General Diaz to Mr. Iglesias was:

"That General Diaz should be Minister of War in the government of the temporary President;" an unac-

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(1) *La Cuestion Presidencial*. J- M. Iglesias. pag. 391.

ceptable condition as Mr. J. M. Iglesias had declared in his circular that neither he nor his ministers would figure as candidates in the elections to come, a circumstance which General Diaz would not admit. So that the revolutionary chief not only recognized the temporary President, but likewise wanted to form part of his cabinet. The recognition was made according to Article 82 of the Constitution, and in keeping with this article the pretensions of General Diaz were quite unprecedented.(1)

This controversy on a fine point of legality and constitutionality was well played by General Diaz and his revolutionary band.

Nevertheless it resembled too much the argument between the wolf and the lamb. As was to be foreseen, negotiations fell through and the only remaining vestige of legality had to flee for dear life into the United States.

With this incident ended the nine years struggle of Porfirio Diaz for the capture of the Supreme Power.

#### THE FOURTH PERIOD.

A Nation should never be given over to one man, no matter who the man is, and whatever the circumstances may be.

THIERS.

A "pronunciamento" or a proclamation according to the talented Mexican historian, C. Pereyra is: "the form which the military organization took in Spain and in the colonies; it is the intervention of the army in public affairs, imposing itself by force. As the social rôle of the army is the conservation and the defense of the country, the pronunciamento constitutes a crime."

(2)

It was through the pronunciamento of Tuxtepec that Porfirio Diaz rode into power, and consequently through a *crime*.

As Napoleon Bonaparte could keep his crown only

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(1) Las Supuestas Traiciones de Juarez. F. I. Calderon. pag. xxxvi.

(2) Historia del Pueblo Mexicano. C. Pereyra. vol. 2. pag. 60.

by the force of arms, so Porfirio Diaz held his own autocratic power only by a series of political felonies. A detailed account of all the atrocities committed by his order and by means of his hired assassins would fill three scores of large sized volumes. We shall, therefore, speak only of the most dastardly and characteristic malpractices, so as to exemplify his mystifying "pacific rule."

The metamorphosis of Porfirio Diaz from his first term up to the present date is as unexpected as the evolution from an indifferent and despicable worm into a variegated and gorgeous butterfly.

He came into the presidency poor as a church mouse but cunning as Ulysses; utterly discredited and at the same time with a wealth of hopes and Machiavelian possibilities; without any authority, albeit knowing he would have a lifetime in practical politics; lacking national and international prestige, though preparing to create it with the help of financial juggleries and artful self-advertisement; deficient in statesmanship, nevertheless trusting that the country's wisdom would gravitate round his chair of state.

He came into the first term almost as a suspicious character. To illustrate his fact he loves to relate to his friends how in the beginning he could not find a self-respecting merchant to honor his notes or to lend him money for the expenses of his administration.

It happened frequently when he walked down San Francisco street in Mexico City, that his friends and acquaintances would hasten into a side street or a shop to avoid saluting him.

Intuitively he guessed that to be able to rule successfully as a despot it is essential to follow Machiavelli's aphorism: "It is not necessary for a prince to have all the virtues which I have enumerated, but it is indispensable that he appear to possess them." (1)

And so the wolf put on a sheep-skin and it deceived the simpletons as well as the wiseacres.

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(1) *Il Principe*. N. Machiavelli.

The following will show the evolution of the so-called presidential terms served by President Diaz:  
 From 1876—1880—first period—Revolutionary President.

- “ 1880—1884 Interregnum of Gen. Gonzalez.
- “ 1884—1888 second period—Protector.
- “ 1888—1892—third period—Consul.
- “ 1892—1896 fourth period—Consul for life.
- “ 1896—1900 fifth “ Anointed Ruler.
- “ 1900—1904 sixth “ Emperor.
- “ 1904—1910 seventh “ Great Mogul.

The graduation from the Revolutionary President to a Great Mogul is quite startling to the ignoramus but it is worth pondering over.

To reach the top of the ascending scale necessitated thirty years of unremitting work of corrosive destruction to all the liberties of the Mexican people—liberties for which they had fought for over sixty-five years. It took Porfirio Diaz just half that time to destroy these. It was eminently a secret operation, the silent labor of the termit gnawing within a log of wood while you are unaware of the destruction from the outside. His first term was the cement foundation for the building of imperial power. Even so he used the term of Gen. Gonzalez to experiment on the result of the initiatives of the payment of the famous English debt, the government bank and the issue of the new five cent nickel coin into the currency.

Very deftly and with unerring knowledge of Gonzalez's greed, he suggested these initiatives while Minister of Fomento (Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures), in his cabinet.

The government of Diaz was not leaving a red penny in the treasury for his successor, M. Gonzalez, notwithstanding that the income of the nation in the latter part of 1880 showed a considerable increase, ascending to \$22,276,845.00. (1)

(1) El Gen. Gonzalez y su gobierno en Mexico. F. Quèvedo y Zubieta. gpa. 123

At the end of his first period in 1879 he declared against re-election, not that he was sincere, but simply because his fellow revolutionists, plotters and rebel generals who had helped him would not let him monopolize all the power and all the graft.

So they decided to put up in 1880 for the presidency a loyal man who would obey mandates of the party unconditionally. The choice fell on Gen. Mier y Teran. Unfortunately for them, Mier y Teran while governor of Vera-Cruz obeyed only too well the order of assassination of President Diaz on the famous 25th of June, 1879. (1) This dastardly act raised a tremendous storm of indignation against Diaz's administration. That settled the candidacy of Gen. Mier y Teran. Thereupon they chose Justo Benitez, ex-secretary of President Diaz and his adviser and Mephistopheles during his revolutionary period. But Diaz grew suspicious of the loyalty of Benitez and so they picked out Gen. Gonzalez who, besides being his "compadre," compeer, was a soldier and would, therefore, obey his orders implicitly.

Gen. Gonzalez was one among the innumerable rebel chiefs who, since Mexico became independent of Spain, have made a living through the medium of revolutions. Without scruples, devoid of patriotism, lacking the most elementary military training, the only talent of these men, with few exceptions, was bravery on the battlefield. Their technical knowledge was equal to that of Gen. Cartaux, who wrote to the General Assembly in Paris his plan for capturing Toulon from the English: "The general of artillery will bombard Toulon for the space of three days, at the end of which I shall attack it on three columns and then I shall take it by storm." (2)

To these adventurers the presidency was symbolized in the National Palace (the residence of the Presi-

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(1) See corresponding page

(2) Memoirs of Napoleon I. De las Casas.

dent while in office) as with the Mohammedans, Mecca or Medina symbolized Mohammedanism.

Their proclamations generally read: "This plan shall be enforced as soon as the general in chief of the *regenerating* army shall occupy the National Palace."

(1) Evidently they considered the nation and especially the treasury their own private property.

Porfirio Diaz was the associate and crony of these filibusters, he absorbed their ways, their ambitions and he succeeded where they had failed.

The administration of Gonzalez made a terrible raid on the treasury of the nation, through the sales of railroad concessions, colonizing schemes, the raising of loans, the national bank, etc.

President Gonzalez and his ring milked the treasury dry, up to the last day, when the President as a farewell, took away \$9,000.00 from the government strong box. (2)

Among the ministers of President Gonzalez were Ignacio Mariscal, Minister of Foreign Relations and F. Landero y Cos, Minister of Finances. Both these men were honesty personified.

Gen. Gonzalez, with the help of his evil genius Ramon Fernandez (governor of the Federal District), plotted to get Landero and Mariscal out. When the nickel law came up for discussion in Congress, Gen. Gonzalez sent orders to suppress the limitation for the payment. The law was framed by Landero.

The Minister of Finances arrived in Congress too late to interfere and as he understood the meaning of the amendment, he tendered his resignation. But before leaving his portfolio he declared in Congress: "We have in the treasury more than one million dollars." (3) To those hungry wolves this statement was like a call to plunder and pillage.

In the deal of the national bank the Parisian

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(1) El Gen. Gonzalez y su gobierno en Mexico. F. Q. y Zubieta. pag. 91. vol. 1-

(2) Idem.

(3) Idem. pag. 225. vol. I.



bankers spent \$1,000,000. in shares and \$1,500,000. in cash to buy off the administration.<sup>(1)</sup>

The loan for the payment of the English debt was a scheme to make twenty million dollars, but (give the devil his due) to allay public indignation the profits were lowered to two million dollars. This, added to the nickel law which flooded the whole country with 5 cent nickels, almost brought about a revolution. Fortunately the presidential term was nearly over and Porfirio Diaz stepped in as the saviour and the outgoing Gonzalez left in ignominy and shame, branded as the Attila-President.

As soon as Gen. Diaz came into power in his second term "he soon did not think of anything else but himself, his idea being not to let any competitors deprive him again of the presidency. After eliminating all competitors he erected himself as a sort of a Providence to the nation, legitimated by necessity. The first thought made him *mistrustful and terrible*; the second thought, *exclusive and jealous*." (2)

To be able to rid himself of his rivals one by one, it was necessary to own, body and soul, the courts, the justice, the police and the army of the nation.

He began therefore to substitute for the whole Department of Justice, from the Minister of Justice down to the merest clerk, his own obedient tools. Instead of the independent Governors who were formerly elected by the will of the people, he placed his own men, ex-generals, ex-revolutionary chiefs, men ambitious for the presidency, as a means of enriching themselves. As Governors they had quite as good a chance of acquiring wealth as if they were in the presidential chair and with less danger of attracting attention. As soon as he had his creatures in all the important government places as Governors, Cabinet Ministers, Senators, Congressmen, "jefes politicos," he began his assault upon the Constitution; he suppressed

(1) Idem. pag. 30. vol. II.

(2) Rectificaciones Historicas. F. Iglesias Calderon. vol. I. pag. 39. 40.

the power of the press, killed personal liberty by arbitrary imprisonments and slowly made away with his enemies by the aid of "accidents" and with the help of the notorious "ley fuga" (runaway law). (1)

That Diaz's government is illegal is proved by the fact that the Washington cabinet refused to recognize it at first because of its revolutionary origin. (2) Only in the year 1879 did the cabinet in Washington formally recognize the Diaz government and despatch a representative to Mexico. (3)

Porfirio Diaz thought, and not without reason, that possession is nine-tenths of the law. To be able to remain in power continuously it was imperative to amend the Constitution. Diaz did this at the end of his second term: at his bidding his parasites in "Congress amended the Constitution so as to allow the President two consecutive terms." (4) This not being sufficient, "in his third term, Congress" instructed by him, "solved the question for all time by abolishing every limitation whatsoever." (5) After this affirmation of power he was practically Consul for life and was at liberty to do as he pleased.

Separate chapters will be dedicated to his assassinations, to the muzzling of the press and to the perversion of justice under his régime.

The much-talked necessity of having Porfirio Diaz in power for the sake of peace is another fairy tale invented by the president and his retinue of courtesans to make a virtue out of a gigantic political graft. Two of the best known writers and historians in Mexico have discussed this argument in strong terms. Says F. Bulnes: "Peace is not the cause of the progress in Mexico; on the contrary, peace is the consequence of the progress in Mexico." (6)

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(1) See corresponding page.

(2) The Maker of Modern Mexico. P. Diaz. Mrs. A. Tweedie. pag. 280.

(3) Idem. pag. 283.

(4) P. Diaz. Mrs. A. Tweedie. pag. 337.

(5) Idem page 339.

(6) El porvenir de las naciones Hispano Americanas. F. Bulnes. pag. 270.

Mr. F. Iglesias Calderon quotes: "Two political personages whose admiration for and adhesion to Gen. Diaz are manifest and proverbial have declared sincerely that the benefits which are attributed to the present government are in reality *due to the anterior liberal governments*. This is equivalent to commuting merit into luck, as the simple lapse of time has developed the welfare born of the liberal government of Benito Juarez." (1)

The partisans and admirers of P. Diaz claim as proof of their assertion the present prosperity of Mexico. That can be easily refuted.

The investment and development of foreign capital mean to Mexico advancement and prosperity, since the country is devoid of home capital. The advancement of agriculture, irrigation and immigration mean the welfare of Mexico. The present administration is not responsible for the initial investment of capital in Mexico; it has never done anything for the development of agriculture or for immigration and only after thirty years of so-called prosperity has it begun to give a thought to irrigation.

It goes without saying that neither inversion of capital nor prosperity were possible in Mexico so long as the political power and practically four-fifths of the land were in the hands of the Church. Benito Juarez achieved this herculean task with a courage and a persistence which are admirable. He succeeded in doing, in the latter 50's, what Italy dared to do only in the 70's and France but lately.

It took some time for Mexico to recover from the effects of this terrible war and from the War of Intervention. Precisely this same man, Porfirio Diaz, who now is held up as indispensable to the prosperity of modern Mexico, then, for almost nine consecutive years, broke the peace of the land and interfered with the advancement of his country by his farcical regenerating plans and criminal revolutions.

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(1) Rectificaciones Historicas. F. Iglesias Calderon. vol. I. page 24.

The first railroad line, from Mexico City to Vera-Cruz, was finished during Lerdo's period. During the term of Gonzalez the overflow of American capital headed toward Mexico. Here I merely quote from an author who wrote in 1884, "an unusual awakening in the life of the country resulted as a first consequence of the construction of the railroads—this irruption of American money was followed by the invasion of iron" (1), and further "they are building twenty thousand houses in Mexico City and the truth is that never since the year of independence in Mexico up to the time when the millions which came to Santa-Anna in payment for the dismemberment of the territory, and when Maximilian came to Mexico with the money of Napoleon III, had we seen in Mexico so much prosperity or such attractive perspective of wealth and welfare." (2)

If Porfirio Diaz is so indispensable now because of his probity and impartiality, why did he not prove his honesty in 1880 when, instead of leaving money in the treasury he left it drained to the dregs, notwithstanding that "The national income for 1879-80 exceeded the sum of \$21,000,000." (3)

A year and a half of honest financial administration under Landero was sufficient to give the nation over a million dollars of surplus in the national treasury. Gen. Gonzalez did not make any pretence at honorable and philanthropic government, for as soon as the honest minister of finances went out, the razzia or raid, on the treasury began in an unchecked and shameless manner.

On the other hand Diaz has always kept up the appearance of a patriotic and upright government although in his first term he classed himself in the same category as Gen. Gonzalez and his freebooters. Only after the third term, and when he was certain that the presidency was in his keeping for a lifetime,

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(1) El gobierno del Gen. Gonzalez en Mexico. F. Quevedo y Zubieta. page 141. vol. I.

(2) Idem page 143 vol. I.

(3) P. Diaz. Mrs. A. Tweedie. page 282.

did he get a semblance of order in the department of finances, for then, he evidently expected to fill his pockets and those of his crew, at leisure.

The income as well as the expenditures of the nation increased with years: "During the same year (1891) they (the Diaz administration) spent all the income of the federal rents which ascended to \$37,000,000. by more than \$5,000,000." declared Matias Romero in congress. (1892) (1)

Matias Romero who had been Mexican minister to Washington during the French Intervention cannot be accused of connivance with the administration, only he was not a financier and he could not juggle with figures as could Jose Y. Limantour. Those who suffered most in the end were the Mexican people and particularly so the government employees. These wretched individuals were not paid in cash for their work until J. Y. Limantour became minister of finances. Instead of cash, the office holders received "alcances", a sort of I. O. U.'s, or notes payable on sight at the treasury.

With some excuse or other these notes were not honored until they were bought up by a firm of German Jews, the Scherers, who purchased them at 40 and 50% off and as soon as they presented them they were immediately paid by the Minister of Finances.

But from the beginning, Gen. Diaz was very careful, very scrupulous in paying his soldiers regularly, as he admitted in a toast at the military college in Chapultepec: "The soldiers who fought with me loved me, they were ready to sacrifice their lives for my life; what had I done, to obtain this generous and self-denying sacrifice, that *voluptuous sacrifice*, to shed their blood for my blood? This only: they had all had the conviction that I had not cheated them out of their income." (2)

In this toast Gen. Diaz practically confesses that

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(1) Le Nacion. 8 Dic. 1892.

(2) Rectificaciones Historicas. F. J. Calderon. pag. 71.

he owes the loyalty of his soldiers, not to the righteousness of his cause, but to the fact that he had paid them regularly.

In his sixth term Porfirio Diaz, impatient and weary of having to repeat the comedy of re-election every four years, had another law enacted by the ever-obedient Congress to amend the Constitution to extend the presidential term from four to six years. This Mexican Augustus, as F. Bulnes calls Gen. Diaz, initiated another law "on April 24th, 1896, which empowered the president to turn over his power to whom he pleased and by the vote of Congress." (1)

After the Great Old Man had finished patching up the Constitution of 1857 it resembled the dress of a buffoon harlequin.

He has choked the independence of the press, and has taken possession of Congress and of the army and navy(?), as the governors and jefes politicos are his slaves and justice his servant, he owns and directs the most perfect political machine in the world.

Tammany Hall, in comparison with his machine, is a pink tea; Russian autocracy seems tame with the Douma at its heels; Abdul Hahmid has played his last trump against the Young Turks; the fatalistic Persians have turned Fate against the allmighty Shah; even Young China has achieved the seemingly inconceivable, of injecting reforms into the Celestial Dragon! All the down-trodden nations of this planet of ours have given the lie to history, to eminent principles, to inherited privileges, and are slowly, joyously, breathing the pure air of liberty. Mexico alone, stands enslaved by the tyranny of one genial hypocrite, tied hand and foot to the ambitious lust of this ex-bandit, hypnotized by the shrewdest of political confidence men.

After having erected his power on an estuary of blood, he acquired untold wealth with his political influence, commanded the flattery of his countrymen,

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(1) *Le Nacion*. 1 Dic. 1902.

and has captured by stealth the admiration of foreign nations. As a climax, Porfirio Diaz would decree the homage of history to his memory.

Should he happen to relax his hold on power or die like an ordinary mortal, history will rush in with a vengeance and vomit forth the truth as from a "cloaca maxima" to bury in the historical Potter's Field his ridiculous fame as patriot, statesman and general.





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When it is in the hands of a power annually to choose from every million only ten innocent men, for the purpose of killing them, everyone lives in a state of terror.

F. BULNES.

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## The Morgue of Porfirio Diaz.

### HIS ASSASSINATIONS AND HIS VICTIMS.

Nearly thirty years ago Porfirio Diaz perpetrated the infamous carnage of Vera-Cruz, on the 25th of June 1879. The Veracruzans and also the Mexicans have never forgotten this date; and with all his pretence at paternalism, his lies and hypocrisies Porfirio Diaz, like a new Macbeth, cannot cleanse his hands of the blood and the responsibility of this dastardly crime, which will brand him in history as a second Caracalla.

The much vaunted "pacific rule" of this paternal hangman has brought upon his head the hatred and contempt of the Veracruzans, who despise him with all their might.

Two years ago the newspapers printed the news of the execution of some political prisoners by President Estrada Cabrera of Guatemala; they seemed to take a special delight in printing long articles and editorials on the subject. I heard several Mexicans remark: "The newspapers are accusing Cabrera of exactly the same crimes which Porfirio Diaz has committed on a larger scale, not once but continuously and up to our present day. This indignation against E. Cabrera is an indirect denunciation of the policy of Porfirio Diaz; for as we have no free press we express our opinion in a roundabout fashion."

I shall quote part of a letter written by a charming Mexican lady, in which this person reflects the feelings of most of her intelligent countrymen in reference to the executions in Guatemala:

"The public being at present exasperated against President Estrada Cabrera of Guatemala and sympathizing so deeply with the four brave ones who were assassinated in so cowardly a manner, there comes to my memory, the 25th of June at Vera-Cruz, and I ask

myself if in Mexico, the perpetrator of that infamy, did not inspire the same repulsion as Estrada Cabrera, and likewise I ask myself, for the latter, could there be the excuse of the influence of a powerful example. Trying to imitate our cynic autocrat, Cabrera dazzled by the wondrous success of his crimes, thought that maybe at the end of a few years, as it has come to pass here, he would have all *the honours, all the incense of a terrestrial divinity*, and that imposing himself through terror, he would attain as his neighbour *to deification in life*.

I insist that in the evils which oppress Guatemala the worse part is due to the example of our despot."

In the first term of P. Diaz (1876-80) there was a great deal of unrest and dissatisfaction in Mexico; Gen. Diaz had not kept his much advertised promises of the plan of Tuxtepec; as a matter of fact things were getting worse than before; it was a case of falling from the frying pan into the fire.

The result was a plot to overthrow the Diaz administration and to put instead a "Restoration" of the lerdist power.

These leaders plotted with little skill and less success. At first the government showed a certain leniency toward the conspirators but there came a time when they felt it would be advisable to chastise and terrorize these enemies of the government.

The police searched the house of Don Felipe Robleda on the denunciation of one of the conspirators. They found under the rug of his room, papers referring to the conspiracy and the list of the names of the plotters.

These names were handed to Gen. Diaz who sent the list of the names to Gen. Mier y Teran ordering him to arrest the men implicated in the plot.

Gen. Teran had these men apprehended, he wired the news to the president who answered laconically: "*Shoot them red-handed.*"

There was no reference in this telegram to a trial or an investigation of the guilt of these men, but only a

peremptory order to kill on sight. Nine men were shot. They were; Jaime Rodriguez, Dr. Ramon Albert Hernandez, Antonio P. Ituarte, Francisco Cueto, Luis Alva, Loenzo Portilla, Vicente Capmany, J. A. Rubalcaba and Juan Caro.

The head lines of a paper of that period: "Juan Panadero" Guadalajara, 13th July 1879, read like those of a modern yellow paper:

"—A BACCHANALIA OF BLOOD.—MURDERS COMMITTED BY TERAN.—NINE ASSASSINATIONS.—EIGHT WIDOWS.—THIRTY-SEVEN ORPHANS.—HORRIBLE DETAILS."

Vera-Cruz. June 29th, 1879.

A notice of the editors says:

—"In this (correspondence from Vera-Cruz) you will see to what a point has reached the savagery of the actual usurper of the power and the profound contempt in which they hold the life of man and of individual guarantees when it is a question of the constitutionalists. From this day on *Tuxtepecan* and *assassin* will mean the same thing if Porfirio Diaz protects the executioners of Vera-Cruz and leaves this unwarranted proceeding unpunished."

I merely quote from the same paper a few examples of the manner in which the order of the president was executed:

"As soon as Teran arrived at the barracks he identified the person of Capmany and said to him:

"Are you D. Vicente Capmany?"

"Yes," answered the mariner frankly.

"Well, I am going to shoot you by order of the president."

"You are going to commit a murder," answered Capmany "for there is no reason for this, and my conscience does not accuse me of any crime."

"Shut up! See here. Shoot this man!" exclaimed Teran.

"Sir, may I write some letters before I die? I only ask ten minutes."

"Shoot him on the spot," shouted Teran, lust-  
ing for blood.

Teran left barracks No. 23 and went over to No. 25. He called in Rubalcaba and Caro, officers there on platoon, and Loredó and Rosello officers of the same barracks and took them to barracks No. 23.

There he gave orders to shoot all four without more ado or any pretense at trial. The last one (Caro) having been loosely bound with ropes started to run and the soldiers fired on him, killing one soldier on guard and wounding two more.

The hyena called in A. Ituarte, a young man 28 to 30 years old.

"Are you Don A. Ituarte?"

"You know me very well," impassively answered the victim.

"I told you twice to leave the city and that the third time I would shoot you."

"That's right."

"Well, then I am going to shoot you on the spot."

"All right."

Before leaving, Ituarte turned to Teran and said to him: "Assassin"

Then came the turn of Cueto.

"Are you D. F. Cueto?"

"You know it as well as I do."

"Shoot him" exclaimed Teran.

"I believe," said Cueto "that if I am guilty of any crime, I should be judged first. Of what are they accusing me?"

"You are conspiring."

"In this case turn me over to a judge, who must be the district judge."

"There is no other judge than myself here, and no law other than my command. Shoot him."

Later Don Luis Alba arrived:

"Are you going to shoot me too, christian?" he asked Teran, with whom he was on very friendly terms.

"I'll do it this minute."

"Are you crazy? Don't you think that sufficient blood has been shed? What am I guilty of? What is my crime?"

"Silence!" yelled Teran—"You are conspiring and it is necessary that you should die."

"I suppose that you have a proof of your assertion."

"I do not need proofs other than my conscience."

"Then, you have no proofs, christian, for you have no conscience."

Hearing this, Teran gave him a push and shouted: "Shoot this man."

The victim then begged to be allowed to write to his wife.

Said Teran: "Nothing will be permitted, you are a lerdist, and to those nothing is conceded."

"Remember, sir, that the lerdists pardoned your life, when you were caught with arms in hand."

"Muzzle this man and shoot him."

At this juncture there arrived at the barracks the judge of the district Mr. R. Zayas Enriquez, whom some neighbours had awakened and had begged to see if he could prevent further slaughters.

Mr. Zayas Enriquez ran to the barracks half dressed, and there had an angry discussion with Gen. Teran who said to him;

"You are responsible for all this."

"I?" exclaimed Zayas in astonishment.

"Yes, you, because the other day when I turned over to you Capmany and Portilla, you did not condemn them to hard labor."

"Because I am an honest man, Mr. Teran, and I do not condemn without legal proofs; I am neither an assassin nor a bailiff, only a district judge; I am here to enforce and see that the law is enforced, not to defeat justice."

“Well, what has been done, has been done.”

“I hope that this bacchanalia of blood will end here.”

We know that Mr. Zayas prevented a continuation of the slaughter, for it seems that Suarez and Galimie were to follow the aforementioned victims.

At daybreak of the 25th, various ladies escorted by a great many little children were wandering through the streets stopping the passersby asking them about their husbands.

“What do you know of Lorenzo?” questioned the half crazed wife of Portilla (one of the victims) to all who passed her, but no one dared tell her the sad news.

The wife of Cueto lost her reason, and they are afraid for her life; his mother is in Orizaba in agony.—The whole population is in mourning, and Teran dares not leave the barracks.

Mr. Zayas in the name of Freemasonry, asked for the bodies of Cueto and Capmany, both brother masons but the bodies were refused him, and they were buried in the potters field, in an unknown place, carried there in a cart escorted by the police.” (1)

There lives now in New York a Mexican gentleman by the name of Rafael de Zayas Enriquez, who left Mexico because of the political conditions there and on account of the persecutions of J. Y. Limantour, whom he had attacked in public speeches and in newspaper articles. This gentleman who is a lawyer, an historian and a writer of great talent came to New York so as to be able to write with freedom about actual conditions in Mexico.

After over a year of work he finished a book “Porfirio Diaz”. It is a psychologica and philosophical review of the life of the president. It is a clever and subtle criticism, but not sincere, for it does not tell the truth; only every now and then does he make a feint at

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(1) Juan Panadero. Guadalajara. 13 Julio, 1879.



it as with a foil; but he is only playing, inasmuch as he seems to be afraid.

Maybe he is apprehensive of the danger of the long arm of Porfirio Diaz reaching him treacherously even in this land of freedom.

It is quite probable that he knows what happened two years ago. An article criticizing Porfirio Diaz and J. Y. Limantour appeared in the *World* signed "A Mexican". Shortly afterward two Mexican gentlemen asked for the name of the author of that anonymous article, offering money for the information. This was refused by the management of the *World* as being against newspaper etiquette. These gentlemen then left in disgust but not without covert threats against the unknown writer.

This same Mr. Zayas Enriquez was district judge during the famous night of the 24th of June in Vera-Cruz. He knows all the details of that affair, better than anyone else in Mexico. Why did he not publish the truth instead of trying to palliate the responsibility of Gen. Diaz, as he knows that the only responsible head was Porfirio Diaz and not Teran who was only a despicable tool?

The Diaz government was then very much alarmed at the horror and indignation caused by that savage act, and it had the impudence to make an official statement, claiming that the murdered men had attacked the soldiers of the barracks and that in the accomplishment of a military duty these had fired on the aggressors killing them.

In that period Porfirio Diaz looked with a certain respect on public opinion and therefore he hid under the cloak of calumny to save Teran from punishment and to ward off his head the stigma of Murderer.

To prove the absurdity of the calumny the bodies of the murdered men were exhumed by Mr. de Zayas; it was found that each one of these had, besides several bullet holes in various parts of the body, one hole in the temple, the finishing stroke, "le coup de grace"

which is only given to the people condemned to capital punishment. One man only did not have this characteristic bullet hole, as he had died instantaneously of a wound through the heart. All the details of the exhumation and investigation were set forth in a book published by the attorneys of Teran in 1879. The government bought all the copies but one, which copy came luckily under my notice.

#### THE MURDERS OF GEN. RAMON CORONA, GEN. GARCIA DE LA CADENA AND GEN. ANGEL MARTINEZ.

Porfirio Diaz knew that as long as there existed in Mexico one or more generals with ambitions to the presidency, his own dreams of a continuous power with himself as the Archangel, could not be practicable but might be an highly hazardous business.

As his own popularity had suffered a setback on account of the Vera-Cruz murders, and not being then quite powerful enough to dictate all the elections in all the states with the bayonets of his soldiers, he resorted to the method of cowards, that of assassinating his rivals by means of "accidents", using either a crazy or fanatical individual with a grudge against the selected victim, or simply a salaried thug.

Gen. Corona was one of the most popular, magnetic personalities among the generals of the war of Intervention. He was brave, intelligent, frank and loyal. During the first term of President Diaz he was sent to Spain as a minister of Mexico. There, as it happened everywhere he went, he became the favorite of the Spaniards. Nevertheless as he was ambitious for the presidency, he found a ready excuse in the attitude of the Spanish Queen towards him to warrant his return to Mexico. Gen. Corona was one of the generals who had helped to capture Queretaro, and was therefore indirectly responsible for the seizure and execution of Emperor Maximilian. The Spanish Queen being an Austrian and a Hapsburg, snubbed him at one of the official receptions.

On his return he was made governor of the State of Jalisco, the first state in Mexico in wealth and population.

He proved to be a very good governor, and was the first one to lower in his state the "alcabalas" or custom house duties which then existed in Mexico from state to state and likewise from city to city, complicating the fiscal administration and encouraging contraband.

His prestige as a governor and as a presidential candidate increased at such an alarming rate that Porfirio Diaz became frightened for his own supremacy, and to ward off an imminent danger and to placate Corona's ambition promised him the presidency in the following term, calculating on an "accident" to eliminate him.

One night as Gen. Corona was going to the theatre with his wife and children, he was attacked and stabbed to death by an indian of the lower class. The murderer ran away quickly round the block and there by quite a strange "coincidence" was stabbed through the heart by a mounted policeman and also wounded by some foot policemen. The peculiarity of this "coincidence" is intensified by the fact that the policeman who stabbed the murderer was accompanied by a whole squad of policemen who could not have seen the murder of Gen. Corona but acted exactly as if they had seen it; they did not intend to capture him alive, but killed him speedily, for dead men tell no tales. The rumor was disseminated purposely that the murderer had committed suicide.

As Ignacio Mariscal very appropriately said in reference to the murder of Gen. Barillas, ex-president of Guatemala, who was assassinated in Mexico city by two Guatemalan boys, on the 17th of April 1907, by order of Gen. Lima, minister of war in Guatemala; "in this class of crimes, for the difficulty which exists in proving the real author of the deed, the sentence of public opin-

ion which declares President Cabrera the murderer of Gen. Barillas, is sufficient."

Public opinion in Mexico points out Gen. Porfirio Diaz as the assassin of Gen. Corona, Gen. de la Cadena and Gen. Martinez.

Gen. de la Cadena was another ambitious general. He was rash enough to tell the truth to President Diaz. He realized his mistake when it was too late. He was watched day and night, but played the sick man in his house and did not receive anybody, his wife cooking and bringing him his food personally. However they did not discover that the woman servant in the house was a spy of Porfirio Diaz. Gen. de la Cadena fooled the chief of police so that when this worthy gentleman went to the president to tell him that Gen. de la Cadena had escaped, the president informed him when the general had escaped and even where he was to be found.

Gen. de la Cadena tried to escape from Mexico but he was caught near Zatecas and while trying to change from one train to the other he was murdered by a band of hired thugs. This elimination was put on to the account of bandits.

The destruction of Gen. Martinez was accomplished in exactly the same manner as in the case of Gen. Barillas, or better said the murder of Gen. Barillas was an imitation of the Martinez affair.

Gen. Barillas was a political refugee from Guatemala because of his presidential ambitions. In this case Gen. Lima was the tool used by President Cabrera, and as Morales the assassin of Barillas declared on the stand in Mexico: "the order to kill comes from 'higher up', from the government and I was afraid of what might happen to me if I should disobey." (1)

Gen. Martinez was a doctor besides being a soldier and a revolutionist, he had also been a partisan of Porfirio Diaz in the revolution of Tuxtepec. He quarreled with the President and thereupon sailed to Europe. On

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(1) El Diario Ilustrado. 9 June 07. Mexico.

his return he settled in New Laredo, Texas, where he was peacefully exercising his profession as a doctor. One evening he was called ostensibly to attend to a patient and on his way thither was waylaid and murdered by a negro who immediately afterward crossed the Mexican frontier.

In this instance Gen. Bernardo Reyes was the Gen. Lima of President Diaz. A mayor engineered the ambush, and on the same day as the assassination of Gen. Martinez sent a telegram to General Reyes, Governor of Nuevo Leon, which ran thus: "Your order obeyed."

The cases are parallel, with but this difference; that in the Martinez affair no notice was taken, as the murder was not known to be of a political nature; in the Barillas murder, the press of Mexico and the Associated Press gave it a world wide publicity. The secrecy of the proceedings used by Porfirio Diaz, shows only a few facets of his political conduct and then only the best side, which is why he stands in the minds of the uninitiated as a great statesman and a benefactor to his country. Cabrera, on the contrary, through the publicity of his deeds is execrated as a modern Nero. But Cabrera excuses himself by claiming that he is only imitating Gen. Diaz for whom he has nothing but the most sincere admiration.

#### THE CARNAGE OF ORIZABA.

Just about two years ago the news was telegraphed to Mexico that some strikers in Orizaba, (state of Vera-Cruz) had pillaged and burned a store, but that after the troops, sent by the government had shot a few aggressive workingmen, everything became peaceful again. Nevertheless rumors went round the city of horrors committed by the soldiers by order of the president. It was only after a very careful investigation that I was able to get the details of the whole affair.

The strike in Orizaba was a capitalistic, not a workman's strike. There were then about 92 textile

mills in Mexico which paid altogether over two millions and a half annually in taxes to the government. This contribution the mill owners considered excessive; accordingly they resolved to bring about a strike, so as to be in a position either to shut down the mills and dictate their own terms to the mill hands or to endeavor to goad the workingmen into such desperate straits that they might provoke a revolution, which would bring about a new state of affairs.

After the shooting in Orizaba the "El Diario" had a visit from a man purporting to be a labor leader, who wanted to know if we would stand by a conspiracy of theirs, as the Diario had sided with them during the strike while all the other newspapers had defended the mill owners.

This man revealed a terrible plot, which consisted in destroying by fire or dynamite all the mills operating in Mexico, if the owners did not come to reasonable terms. The Diario answered that it could and would not even entertain such a thought, that it was in business to publish news, not to incite revolutions or encourage the destruction of property.

This incident shows to what a degree of bitterness and distress the men had reached when they could even suggest such a fiendish act.

The strike had started this way: In Puebla the union had given orders to a mill to stop work; this union was assisted with money by the Orizaba mill hands who were then working. The Puebla mill owners complained of this to the proprietors of the Orizaba factories, on which these gentlemen shut down their mills, thus cutting off the source of help of the Puebla workingmen. By these tactics the Puebla union was brought to terms and after this was effected the Orizaba owners opened their mills again.

But there arose a new difficulty, as the Orizaba union claimed better terms before going back to work. This was refused and the strike began anew. Meanwhile the strikers had sent a commission to the president

to get his help and influence in settling their conditions and demands.

Porfirio Diaz promised to help them, and to this effect he sent a commission down to Orizaba. This commission called a meeting in a theatre and promised that if the workmen would go to work they would get their demands.

The strikers accepted this compromise and went back to work.

In the morning some of the women went to the store of a Frenchman, who gave the factory hands credit on victuals in exchange for checks distributed instead of money by the mill owners. As the hungry women went into the shop, this man began insulting them and their families with vile and indecent language. The women returned home and indignantly related the happening to their husbands urging them to avenge them. Infuriated by the humiliations, the hunger, the sacrifices undergone for the sake of the strike, these men had their cup of bitterness filled to the brim, and their anger vented itself on the man who had added the drop which made it overflow. They became unmanageable, and cursed by the women as cowards and curs they attacked the shop, sack-ing and burning it. The police had no trouble in quieting and dispersing the mob, and through the efforts of the jefe politico, who was very much liked in Orizaba, the workingmen were induced to go back to work peaceably. Everything was quiet again, the offenders responsible for the assault and the burning of the shop were arrested. The "El Diario" was the only paper which had dared tell the truth and in an editorial had put the responsibility of the riot on the Frenchman. This man hastened to the office of "El Diario" and had the impudence to offer \$5,000 for another editorial which would rehabilitate him. His request was politely refused.

Public opinion favored the strikers, and all believed that the whole affair had ended with the appre-

hension of the rioters. But notwithstanding the fact that everything was calm and that the mill hands had all gone back to work peaceably, President Diaz suddenly and unexpectedly gave orders to the sub-secretary of War, to go down to Orizaba with a few hundred soldiers. Mind you, everybody and everything was perfectly tranquil and quiet, no attempt had been made by the workmen to create any further disturbance.

Notwithstanding this, the two official executioners hastened to Orizaba, and there posted their soldiers in the mills behind pillars and walls. When the men and women entered the different factories to go to work, the soldiers started a murderous fusillade, mowing down the helpless mass of humanity like a pack of rabid dogs. The noise was terrific, the uproar undescrivable, the clamor of despair and horror from the wounded and slaughtered people beyond human description. It was a perfect pandemonium, not of battle, but of a cruel, relentless, coldblooded man-hunt, the massacre of innocent, helpless, unarmed men, women and children. The cracking of rifles, the smoke, the dust arising from stray bullets, the blood spurting in torrents from gaping wounds; here and there prostrate bodies with their heads almost shot off, the brains spattering walls and floors, made a picture, sickening, revolting and unparalleled in the history of civilization. Not content with this the commanders ordered the soldiers to follow up their *victory* and the murderous sharpshooting continued into the streets, the raking fire was directed through the windows into the houses of the workingmen who had sought refuge there, pursuing the carnage of innocent women and children. Further orders were given to the rurales\* to hunt the fleeing men into the country, into the fields, even chasing after them into the mountains. But the rurales who are used to all kinds of rough work refused

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\* Country Police



to obey the command to shoot helpless men and women, so orders were given to shoot the rurales too. The number of victims amounted from 650 to 700. On the same night of the carnage from 450 to 500 mangled corpses of the murdered workingmen and women, were taken stealthily to the railroad station, there laid on flat cars and covered with straw. The conductor who was to drive this funeral train to Vera-Cruz refused to do so. They found another less scrupulous conductor who drove the train to Vera-Cruz on to the wharf. The corpses were taken from there in boats out into the bay and there thrown into the sea as *food for the sharks*.

This was the finishing stroke of the most brutish, the most craven and the wildest orgie of blood perpetrated in the annals of humanity; it was an insensate Saturnalia of Gore, the luxurious rage of an impotent, cowardly, sadic old despot.



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Tyranny is evil, because it is impossible that under  
it the genius of a people should develop and have free  
play

MAZZINI.

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# The System.

## A POLITICAL MAFIA. ITS RESULTS.

When an individual or a group of individuals creates a system, be it political, social or commercial, they make themselves responsible for the good as well as the evil consequences resulting from this system.

Porfirio Diaz is always itching for the flattery and praise for the redundant prosperity in Mexico; but upon his white head rests also the responsibility of the nefarious effects of his political mafia, his legalized black hand, the true, legitimate sons of his powerful and abstruse, statesman-like cogitations.

When a ruler orders his vassals to murder at his bidding, be they governors, jefes politicos or just his friends, he is by professional etiquette supposed to close his eyes or wink at their own private vengeance and delinquencies. The jefe politico has been the most useful tool of the government. "The most cruel instrument of despotism—of the low and tenebrous despotism of the "ley fuga"—without any doubt, the jefe politico has been the most acute public calamity to Mexican society (1) And the governors: "the majority of our governors are cordially detested by the people of the respective states.

"Each one of these people would make any sacrifice to get rid of the governor of his State." (2)

But they cannot, as each governor is chosen by the president as a reward for loyalty or as a sop to their ambitions. Sometimes, but very rarely, they rule justly and lawfully, but more frequently they graft, murder and break all the ten commandments and all the penal codes, knowing well that Pórfirio Diaz will ignore intentionally all the outrages, spoiliations, injur-

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(1) Hacia donde vamos. Q. Moheno. pag. 39.

(2) Idem. pag. 15.

ies and foul play perpetrated by them so long as they do not play politics against Porfirio Diaz.

A fair type of the unscrupulous, perverse, incompetent, stupid, all powerful governor is here described. I shall relate a characteristic example of his governmental methods.

About the year 1891 the theme of all the conversations in Puebla was the rape of two young girls, daughters of a German watchmaker named Weber. Public opinion pointed out as author of this outrage the Governor who, through his social and political position kept himself beyond the reach of the law.

A newspaper man of Puebla took upon himself to expose the details of the affair, calling attention to the fact that the persons responsible for this act of satyriasis were a high functionary of the State and a very rich Mexican gentleman. This writer drew upon his head the ire and hatred of the allmighty governor, who awaited his opportunity to revenge himself.

Two thugs (one of whom was murdered later on) in the pay of the governor, received orders to waylay the newspaper man and "give him water", 'darle agua', a term used in Mexico to designate official murder.

One night while the latter and several friends were sitting round a table in a cantina there passed one of the governor's secret police who seeing the journalist, beckoned him aside to invite him to a dance. He accepted the invitation, but as he had been drinking heavily his friends begged him to remain with them. But he gave no heed to this warning and followed the would-be host who was accompanied by another secret service man.

On their way they passed through a side street, in which, by a quaint coincidence, there lived a sweetheart of the governor. There, almost under the window of this woman the two cut-throats caught the newspaper man, one pinning his arms behind, while the other was stabbing him to death. So swiftly and expeditiously was the deed committed, that the vic-

tim had no time to open his mouth to raise an alarm. There was nothing which could give a clue to the assassin.

In the morning the governor's sweetheart leaning over her balcony witnessed the horrible spectacle offered by the body lying on its back steeped in a puddle of blood, eyes wide open, hands contracted, imbedded in the mud, in sign of the silent struggle waged against his murderers.

Several papers in Mexico City, among which the "Monitor Republicano" and "Gil Blas", treated the matter extensively, but before it took a scandalous turn the Governor sent there a congressman, who settled the business with money, much money, and thus the Press was silenced.

To exculpate himself before public opinion, the Governor put forward as responsible for the double abduction a friend of his, who offered to marry either one of the girls. But neither of these two victims of the lustful governor accepted the proposition.

Once upon a time there lived a governor, in Guapajuato, who had heard of the great fortunes made by the culture of silk worms. After laborious but inefficacious reading of treatises on the subject, he became impressed by one paramount and orthodox fact, that mulberry trees were essential to the growth and culture of silk worms. So he hastily proceeded to uproot the trees in the alameda (public square) and mulberry trees were planted in their stead. The mulberry trees grew and expanded their emerald green foliage, while the impatient governor made it his official duty, to inspect the bonanza trees with care and amore. One fine day after having scrutinized the leaves, he turned to his aide-de-camp and exclaimed angrily; "They have deceived me; here I have wasted money and time on these mulberry trees and not one silk worm has made its appearance as yet!" To think that this man was a rival of P. Diaz.

The governor's power is almost supreme in his

state; Porfirio Diaz is the Czar of Mexico and his governors are his grand-dukes.

"Each one of our governors, dreams in his sphere of local government, to be a General Diaz in miniature. From this follows their grotesque attempt to imitate the model. There are governors who take their daily cold plunge at 5 in the morning, because they know or think General Diaz does the same and imagine that the moral value of the president has its root in the ablutions." (1)

There was wonderful specimen of the unconscious, I should say amoral type of the Diaz governor. He ruled long, too long for the long-suffering state of Hidalgo; one term more and he would have owned every square inch of that state. He confiscated property on the slightest pretext; robbed, murdered and destroyed everything and everybody interfering with his greedy lust for possession and indisputable power. The list of his official murders is formidable. His pet enemies were newspaper men. These martyrs of a hopeless cause were destroyed like flies on a summer's day. One case among the many is so abject and fearful as to challenge incredulity.

A newspaper man after repeated beatings insisted upon showing up the unlawful official acts of the governor. Finally he was beaten insensible and then taken bodily into a brick-kiln and there was *cremated alive*!

From this example one realizes the sinfulness of putting so much power into the hands of ignorant, greedy and unscrupulous men.

A great many of the horrors I am speaking of have happened quite a while ago, but the situation instead of improving, seems to deteriorate and corrupt all the few good elements left.

The present government created by Porfirio Diaz can be likened to a basket of apples; the fruit on top has been rubbed and cleaned until it is glowing with colors

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(1) Hacia donde vamos, Q Moheno. pag. 14.



and freshness—this is for the benefit of the foreigners and strangers; but should you lift the top layer of fruit, you would be disgusted by the rotten, putrid and fetid material lying underneath—this is for the benefit of the Mexicans.

Two years ago on a hacienda (farm), belonging to the minister of justice, a young man discovered the body of a man of the middle class, in a state of impending putrefaction. The wounds were not those of an accident and his valuables had been left untouched. He reported the case to the judge of the district. The judge was not opening an investigation or seeming to take any interest in trying to clear up the mystery. Nobody appeared to know the man nor the cause of his death. The young man finally insisted on the necessity of the judge's attending to his official duties, whereupon the judge in self-defense showed him a telegram from the federal government, advising him not to investigate into the "accident".

The minister of justice was very indignant that his hacienda was being used for such purposes, for assuredly it was a diabolic invention to use the farm of the administrator of justice for the consummation of a crime. But murder will out, and it was discovered that the person responsible for the deed was none other than the jefe politico who rid himself or rid the governor of an enemy. This governor is a relative of Porfirio Diaz.

An important sinecure is the governorship of of the federal district; next to it comes the chief of police of Mexico City.

About ten years ago they had a chief of police whose evil ways brought about his own destruction. But meanwhile he ruled outrageously and without fear of intervention from the benign Porfirio Diaz.

This Chief of Police had fallen in love with a young girl whom he expected to marry in the near future. Now the confessor of this girl who was aware of the

character of chief, opposed his spiritual influence to the marriage.

One night the poor padre was taken to the police station; there he underwent a sort of a third degree; they tied him to a bench and with a funnel forced him to swallow enormous quantities of alcohol until they had provoked a congestion. Thereupon he was taken to the street and made to lean gently against a telephone pole, where the police picked him up later, as being ostensibly in a state of unconscious ebriety. The unfortunate padre died of congestion and he was buried in the common graveyard, as nobody had recognized the dead priest.

When the family noted the disappearance of their kinsman they realized who the unknown dead man, was. The clerical press mentioned the incident in extenso, but no notice of it was taken by the authorities, and the chief of police continued his artistic career.

One of the machiavellian tactics of Porfirio Diaz consists in having an heterogenous cabinet, that is to say, a cabinet in which the ministers are of opposite political ideas and are even inimical to one another, so as to prevent any accord between themselves. That is the reason that although there are no political parties in Mexico, there exist political groups, headed by two or three ministers who covertly war against each other.

Romero Rubio, Dublan, Pacheco, Baranda, Limantour and Reyes have been the most prominent chiefs of these groups, with the acquiescence of the President.

The most powerful of these chiefs has been and still is Limantour, the financial partner of Porfirio Diaz; and when things have almost reached the breaking point, the ministers who are enemies of Limantour have been ousted in a fashion more or less scandalous. So it happened with Baranda and also with Gen. Reyes.

General Bernardo Reyes is a man famous for his cleverness and daring. Porfirio Diaz kept him for a long time at the head of the state of Nuevo Leon where

he made a reputation as a skillful governor. But the party of Limantour became too powerful and was so far emboldened as to indicate Limantour as the successor of President Diaz. The latter then called in General Reyes as Minister of War, gave him ostensibly his protection, so that in a short time he became the head of the "Reyists" with Minister Baranda as a partner.

But according to the phrase of Porfirio Diaz, General Reyes "learned too fast," as he had organized a "phalanx," the "second reserve," which became popular all over the country. Newspapers were started fostering the candidacy of Reyes, making war to the knife on Limantour and creating very bitter feeling.

To give satisfaction to his partner Limantour who is very useful to him, Porfirio Diaz dismissed Baranda and Reyes from their respective ministries; but as Reyes was necessary to him as a check to the "cientificos" as Limantour's party calls itself, he replaced Bernardo Reyes as Governor of Nuevo Leon.

Reyes was, like all the governors are, disliked in this State, for the many murders committed, for his arbitrary and despotic character and other sufficing reasons.

The inhabitants of Nuevo Leon wanted to shake their yoke and conceived the brilliant idea of nominating a candidate of their own; and for this purpose they created electoral clubs and fostered the candidacy of Don Francisco Reyes, an honorable man and popular in the State.

The 2nd of April, 1903, on the eve of the elections, the partisans of the new candidate organized a parade according to law. Accompanied by a brass band, the procession started from the alameda, heading toward the centre of the city, with the hurrahs and shouts in favor of Francisco Reyes. As they reached the principal square, in front of the governor's palace, a broadside was poured into them by the police on the roofs of the governor's palace and the adjoining houses, killing many of the paraders, among whom were many

prominent citizens. In this manner was the procession stopped and the candidacy of his rival squelched. To escape assassination the unfortunate opponent was obliged to flee the same night to Mexico City, disguised as a fireman of the locomotive which took him out of Monterey. On his arrival in Mexico City, Mr. Francisco Reyes complained to President Diaz who promised him a fair trial and justice. The Press made a great deal of noise on the subject and the Limantourists or "cientificos" availed themselves of this occurrence to deal a death blow to General Reyes by accusing him formally in Congress.

But the expected happened: Porfirio Diaz gave orders to absolve General Reyes, and all the blame was put on the unlucky paraders "who killed each other in order to slander the distinguished General Reyes", who triumphed in the elections and who, thanks to Porfirio Diaz, continues to rule the State of Nuevo Leon in peace as a lesson and punishment to the people

#### HISTORY OF A GREAT CONSPIRACY.

The correct heading for this chapter should be: "the history of two great crimes," for two men were assassinated so as to efface the tracks of the conspirator who had attempted to destroy the life of Porfirio Diaz. The personage at the bottom of this mysterious plot is known, and his name is whispered as a secret behind closed doors, for the would-be-king is still a high government functionary. He failed by the breadth of a hair, by the turn of the hand, and two lives, the tools of his ambition, were crunched to keep his own life intact. Read carefully the proceedings of the trial, follow attentively the scarlet thread running through this wonderful maze of apparent contradictions and the logical and evident solution of the riddle will jump at you like a jack in the box when you touch the right spring.

It is the tale of a crime for a crime, illustrative of

the dangerous and perverse system created by Porfirio Diaz, which like a boomerang flew back and almost knocked him off his throne.

On the 16th of September 1897, the anniversary of the independence of Mexico, as customary, the President was walking from the National Palace to the Alameda, escorted by the high functionaries of the realm, and surrounded by his soldiers, when suddenly a man broke the protecting line of bayonets, and rushing at Diaz, ere anybody could stop him, struck him a blow on the neck which staggered but did not fell him to the ground. The astonishment and confusion were intense; a score of officers sword and pistol in hand were ready to take the man's life as a swift punishment for his daring. But the President commanded them to desist from violence and to turn him over to the proper authorities.

The individual responsible for this idiotic and useless attack was a wretched, unbalanced, alcoholic being by the name of Arnulfo Arroyo. He was taken to police headquarters and there by order of the Chief of Police was put in a straight jacket and a muzzle clapped over his mouth. "More than once did Governor Rebollar order the removal of the muzzle and as often did Velasquez put it on again." (1)

The evening of the aggression, the chief of police, and the police inspector and the Chief of the Secret Police had a confab with the Minister of the Interior, with the following result: On his return to police headquarters the chief of police gave orders to his servant to buy a dozen knives and commissioned the police inspector to organize as perfect and lifelike an imitation of a "lynching" as he could produce, with Arroyo as villain and victim. The police inspector was to be the stage manager, hero and the avenger of this real tragedy, which consisted in picking out seven "tigers" from the police force, disguising them as

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(1) Historia del gran crimen. J. M. Rabago. pag. 31.

“pelados”\*, arm them with the knives bought for the purpose and then leading them on to an attack on police headquarters where they were to lynch Arroyo and then, when making their escape, to shout “Viva Mexico” and “Down with Anarchy.”

While on one side the police were preparing the stage setting, the government and the minister of war were trying to devise a means of destroying Arroyo in a legal and constitutional manner. They unconsciously attempted to make a case of lese-majesty out of it, but the constitution naturally did not provide for that; they tried to insist that the crime, which was not a crime but only an abortive attempt, was of a military nature. Unfortunately for this theory Arroyo was not a military man; so they discovered that when he had attacked the President, this one had been arrayed in full dress military uniform; but when on looking up the military code, it was found that the punishment for such a crime was only two years of prison, the officious wisacres gave it up in disgust.

About twelve thirty the curtain of the show was raised, the seven policemen or “tigers” masquerading as “pelados” dashed smartly in an attack against police headquarters and entered the room of the prisoner. The police on guard there having been disarmed beforehand, made but a feeble resistance and desisted entirely on recognizing some of their colleagues. Arroyo was sitting on a chair in a straight jacket, helpless, unable to defend himself, and the intrepid, indomitable “tigers” went at their job like professional cut-throats, “the stilettos” penetrated the stomach, now the thorax, again the lungs, mangling violently, passionately, with incredible frenzy, the body of the victim as it shook in lamentable impotence, the blood spurting from the torn muscles and veins, and running on the floor. Nine wounds were inflicted on that mass of flesh—the criminals labored impatiently, seeking only the perfection of the stroke, the gross art of assassinat-

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\* Indians of the poorest class.

ing, aiming at the entrails, according to their rude physiological knowledge. The victim gave a piercing cry of horror, anguish and despair, a howl condensing the force of an existence losing itself in endless night.

The assassins had their decorative coquetry, they unfurled and fluttered the national flag—shouted “Viva Mexico.” In this detail I was not able to ascertain if it was an artistic improvisation of the “matadores” or a thought of Velasquez who was inviting the complicity of the country. (1) Then they fled shouting “Down with anarchy”. In police headquarters Sanchez fired, by order, a revolver, broke several window panes so as to attract the curiosity of the idlers and the attention of the Chief of Police who was awaiting this signal. The belated persons who were attracted by the noise were allowed to enter the police station, some of the more timid were even courteously invited to enter, and then they were all arrested as dangerous and suspicious characters, as authors and perpetrators of the crime.

Very soon afterward the Minister of War, an asthmatic old man was apparently taking fresh air on his balcony in the Independencia street, when an officer of the police stopped under his window and said: “I come to inform you from the Chief of Police, that they have *already* lynched Arroyo.” whereupon the General lifted his hand deprecatingly and without hesitation or astonishment said: “I regret it for the honor of the country.”

In the morning of the 17th the official paper gave the news of the lynching, informing he public that a violent mob of men had killed Arroyo sweeping everything before it, that only a few were under arrest, strictly “incomunicados”, and giving their names, also a description of the weapons left in the room by the fleeing lynchers.

The first impression produced by this extraordinary news was one of terror. The story of the lynch-

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(1) Historia del gran crimen. J. M. Rabago. pag. 45.

ing was a fable impossible of general acceptance and produced only sardonic smiles that could be interpreted as a lack of all belief that the "people" by a strange novelty had dedicated itself to the exercise of justice. (1) Nobody credited this macaberesque invention. The President exclaimed "it is a pity, they have cut the thread, and what is worse, it is shameful for the country." Also when a commission of prominent persons congratulated him on his miraculous escape from murder he said "What I regret, is that we cannot now claim that in Mexico they do not lynch." But nobody, not even the President believed that Arroyo had been lynched. The unofficial newspapers derided the fable; popular feeling became so intense and threatening, that impelled by this tremendous pressure, General Mena and J. Y. Limantour called a meeting of the cabinet, resulting in a demand for an official investigation by Congress.

Congress met, and the justice of Mexico was notified to bring to account the authors of this atrocious and illegal occurrence. The police heads who had organized the outrage were shocked and surprised at being constrained to enter the prison (Belem) as a result of a service to "high politics." The young lawyers defending the guilty policemen, argued that all the prisoners with the exception of one had only followed orders from their chief, as soldiers obey their commander. They did excellent work, especially in the cross-examination.

The chief of police was on the rack, he was questioned, cross-questioned, desperately trying to keep up the silly farce of the popular lynching. Hopelessly he fought truth and the evidence accumulating against him and his flimsy fairy tale. At last suspecting that the invisible hand which had directed him and the influence on which he had counted was now powerless to protect him, he divined that by an irresistible logic of events he would be sacrificed as the scapegoat of

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(1) Idem. pag. 56.



this tragic farce and realizing that the ground was giving way under him, he lost his head, and trapped, cornered like a wild boar by a pack of tenacious hounds, turned round to fight for his last chance, the chance of his life. Pale and trembling with excitement he rose declaring that now he would tell the truth, the whole truth, but the judge stopped him instantly, with the excuse of the lateness of the hour, adding however, that he could make his declaration the day following.

The next morning the news of his "suicide" was published. Three days before, a newspaper had published the same news, evidently as a tip that sooner or later such an occurrence must take place. The rest and the seven "tigers" were sentenced to death, but later, on a technicality, the judgment was commuted to six years imprisonment.

The inside history of this plot is as follows. Two generals high in the army plotted a "coup d' état", for the purpose of installing themselves in power after the assassination of Porfirio Diaz. They had the immediate power of the country in their hands; the army was under their direct orders and the police and the judges of the Federal District were subject to them also. They used the chief of police as their tool, bribed with the promise of a governorship, and the former in his turn used Arroyo for the purpose of assassinating the President, though we cannot imagine what inducements or arguments the chief could have employed to convince Arroyo and urge him to commit such a desperate and hopeless deed. Furthermore the chief counted on an Indian, paid for that purpose, to watch the President during his walk from the palace to the alameda, with order to kill any person attacking him. On the 15th of September Arroyo got drunk in Atzapatzalco; he was arrested, and kept in jail overnight. Next day, Arroyo still dazed by alcoholic fumes, unarmed, for his revolver had been confiscated, felt nevertheless as if hypnotized by a tenacious will greater than his own that impelled him to attack the President,

with the aforementioned result. The Indian however came too late to fulfill his part of the work, as the President suspecting a plot had interfered in time. When Arroyo arrived at police headquarters they put him immediately in a straight jacket and muzzled him, being mortally afraid that the wretched creature would "squeal" and betray him as well as the "men higher up" for the chief alone never would have dared to plot against the life of the President.

Therefore the prompt elimination of Arroyo was of the utmost necessity and although the President was desirous that Arroyo should not die, the system was more powerful than his wishes. The lynching was the hasty conception of excited and alarmed heads, for a cool and calm reflection would have dismissed it as absurd. Evidently none of the plotters counted on the horror and indignation that such an act would arouse, and the result was the trial and imprisonment of all the lynchers, as well as of the chief of police. That the life of this man was doomed from the beginning is proved by the publication of his "alleged" suicide in an official paper, either as a mistake or as a warning that such an event might happen.

After the official paper had given the false news of the "suicide" of the chief three days before his death, the Governor of the federal district, ordered the "alcaide", inspector of the jail to start a minute perquisition through the rooms and the person of the prisoner, to see if he might not be concealing any weapons. In spite of the careful search however, nothing was found, yet the morning after the "suicide" near the bed of the chief the revolver with which he was supposed to have killed himself was strangely discovered. On the very night, within an hour, within five minutes of the "suicide," the police inspector was sitting chatting with several men in a place in the prison not far distant from the prisoner's cell, when on some trivial pretext he arose and left the room, returning and continuing the conversation after a

brief interval. During his absence a pistol shot was heard in the cell of the chief of police—the shot that ended the life of the unarmed “suicide.” Next day the story of the “suicide” was circulated. Who else but a powerful man could have forced a judge to revoke a death sentence and change it to six years imprisonment?



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While there might temporarily be state secrets, it is impossible that there should be national secrets, and the only result of a purely official presentation of a country's status is to lose credit as a government without helping the country.

F. BULNES.

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## Justice Under Diazpotism.

Justice is the end of government; it is the end of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.

MADISON IN "THE FEDERALIST."

Mexico lost her liberty in the pursuit of justice. The justice of Mexico lies hidden within the palm of a political trickster, whom death must summon before his closed fist will relax its fearful hold upon a crumpled, wilted, and disfigured justice.

The political credit of a nation is expressed by its justice, the independence of its courts, the incorruptibility of its judges. The first questions a foreigner asks about a nation will be "Are your investments safe? Is personal liberty secure?"

There are two kinds of justice in Mexico; one for the foreigner, another for the Mexican. Porfirio Diaz learned by experience that most wars and foreign interventions in Mexico, have been brought about by the legal wrongs and the arbitrary discriminations against foreigners. Therefore he made it one of his political commandments to treat foreigners as gingerly and equitably as conditions might permit. The foreigner brings into the country either money or energy; he toils and helps improve the economical conditions of the land; he does not interfere in politics, neither has he any ambition outside of enriching himself; when oppressed or illtreated, he can always invite international complications and discredit the country by appealing for redress to his consul or minister; on the other hand to the Diaz regime, the native does not represent the same direct advantages to the country as the foreigner; the Mexican loves to play politics and in this manner interferes with the power and ambition of the despot. Justice is essentially by nature demo-

cratic, its verdicts are indifferent to caste, birth influence and wealth; it is therefore logical that that justice in its purest sense cannot dwell in a nation ruled by a satrap, since a one-man's rule is inherently of an aristocratic type.

It was the crafty and canny policy of Porfirio Diaz to offer:—justice, fair play and special privileges to the foreigner; to his henchmen immunity, license, favors and protection; to the independent native arbitrariness, injustice and chicanery.

Porfirio Diaz represents the two-faced Janus: the front the face of a Minerva; serious, calm, just, profound and noble; that is for the outsider, but, seen from the back, for the Mexican, it is the mask of a Medusa; terrible, racked by fear and cruelty, a horrible thing to behold in its petrified violence.

Porfirio Diaz has a business partner, a Spaniard, who is very rich and a very shrewd and influential man; it is a common occurrence to see the judges of the supreme court and of the federal districts dancing attendance on this Spaniard to discuss with him the resolutions of judicial affairs. These judges are corrupt in a shameless and cynical manner; those who are not corrupt and who try to do their duty always obey the orders of all the satellites, of the minister and sub-secretary of justice and of Porfirio Diaz whose merest wish is a command. Take at random from the list of the judges any one and you will get an idea of the type of men dispensing justice in Mexico.

One is a native of Oaxaca. In eight years as a judge has made a fortune of over one million dollars. He is now president of the supreme court, has been a magistrate, president of the debates and agent for the government. He is a perfect type of the courtier, lackey of the president. As the administration favored the suppression of the jury system, he in an interview gave out this argument against the jury system, claiming that no matter what the jury's intentions were, he could always induce it to indict according



to his views. It is a saying of his that there *is no other justice than the royal wish of the ruler.*

Another, still a young man. Not quite a year ago was trying a murder case, when one evening at a dinner with friends he made a bet with the lawyer of the defence, claiming that he would condemn the accused man to death. The lawyer took him up and as a guarantee of good faith, asked for a written statement of the bet, which consisted in the payment of a dinner to the winner. A newspaperman got hold of the document and published it with the story of the bet. It created a great deal of scandal and indignation. Everybody expected to see him dismissed from the bar. But the unexpected happened; the lawyer for the defence went to jail for contempt of court, he sentenced the accused man to death and won his bet—and he continues to dispense “justice” without molestation or even a reprimand from the minister of justice or Porfirio Diaz. One of his judicial axioms is *that every man who is accused is a criminal and should therefore be condemned.*

Another has been under indictment on eleven counts and in his tribunal they have committed real horrors; notwithstanding which he always stays in his place. In 1904 his staff of secretaries was imprisoned as they had stolen all the fines of the prisoners. The case was dismissed. Anybody with money can fix his case with the judge. He laughs cynically at Mexican justice and says that *it is a “pamplina”, a chickweed, a trifle which feeds many people.*

Another specimen of the representative judge is an ex-lawyer who was sentenced to six years prison for bigamy. After his term in Belem he came out as the protector and defender of the poor. He committed a thousand swindles, tricks and petty graft to such a degree that even the sleepy vigilance committee had to take some action against him. He was indicted on several charges, but suddenly the case against him was dismissed and he was appointed secretary of a

tribunal, judge, and government agent for the war department.

### BELEM—THE MEXICAN BASTILLE.

Where judges are corrupt one can easily imagine what the jail or expiatory place of justice must be. Belem, the Mexican Bastille, is more than purgatory. It is hell! It is not described in the books of travels for travelers are not allowed to visit this place of torment.

The circles of Dante's *Inferno* corresponded to the iniquities committed by the sinner; but compared to Belem the Black Hole of Calcutta is a drawing room, the Siberian jails philanthropic institutions and the "piombi" or cells in the Doge's palace abodes of luxury.

Belem is the superlative expression of Mexican injustice, it is an example of the equity of Porfirio Diaz, the Just, the True, the Impartial. Belem is not a jail, nor a galley, nor a prison; it is Gehenna, Tophet, the pit of Acheron; it is an unmentionable disease on the body of Mexican justice, a large infected sewer containing vermin, filth, carrion, disease, pollution and depravity; filled with jail birds, packed like sardines, and treated like cattle. It is an abomination on the face of earth, an human cess-pool, a foul, malodorous example of the benevolent interest the old despot takes in matters hidden from the view of strangers.

The Diaz government has spent millions for a park and a drive in Chapultepec, for a model post office, a classic telegraph office and a monumental house for congress, it is spending from 8 to 10 million dollars for a marble opera house, which will be a marvel to behold. But the plans for a model jail as suggested by W. de Landa y Escandon has been rotting for the last 6 years in the archives of the government!

Belem which is about the size of half a New York block, contains, that is, it is made to contain anywhere between 5,000 to 6,000 men, besides 300 boys and 600

women. There is a room 180 square yards where 1800 men are supposed to sleep. They have to fight so as to be able to lie down to rest, the weaker must sit up or stand or lie on one another. Bugs, fleas, lice of every description swarm in myriads and one flat blow of the hand anywhere on the wall will crush hundreds of them. The food is unfit for consumption, it is left sometimes two or three hours exposed to sun or rain before it is distributed. They permit the men to have a shower bath in cold water, but they are left to dry themselves the best way they can, for no towels are given, nor even soap. The result of this state of affairs is the great number of epidemics and the frequency with which the inmates are afflicted with tuberculosis. On the 7th of October 1908 "El Diario" published the list of the prisoners stricken with typhoid, in one day: 176 cases. Next day no list could be had, the truth was suppressed by the authorities. The prison wardens hold undisputed sway, they are mostly inmates of the prison; they graft, rob, commit every kind of villanous deed, brutalize and sometimes beat to death the refractory prisoners.

Homo-sexuality is rampant and is encouraged by the wardens; men and boys are used willingly or by force for illicit intercourse, alcohol and even marihuana (an intoxicating weed), are used to facilitate that purpose.

There is a vigilance committee composed of twelve individuals who are supposed to see that there are no abuses and violations of the law and the rules. They visit the prison once every three or six months, but more often they electrify their activities, as the council of ten in Venice, only at the reception of anonymous letters sent by the prisoners themselves.

#### THE PENITENTIARY.

In spite of its clean and healthy appearance it is a place of subtle and refined inquisition. The prisoners are illtreated, illfed, illkept. In seven years 1275 people entered the penitentiary and 162 died. They

make the inmates work and pay the men one-sixteenth of the pay of the lowest workingman. The wardens as in Belem are all powerful, brutal, unjust. The directors of the penitentiary add months of imprisonment to the sentence of the prisoners on the sole information of the wardens. The unfortunate prisoners have to go around almost naked if they do not possess clothes, unless they are given to them by charitable persons. Doctors visit the place every eight or ten days.

### THE CORRECTIONAL SCHOOL.

This is called so by mistake, for it is properly a school of vice and crimes, where minors serve their terms. From there most of the boys come out full-fledged thieves, pickpockets, homo-sexuals, bullies and even worse. They are treated like animals and are made to work without pay for the benefit of the friends of the administration.

There is a term which you hear all the time in Mexico when a man is sent to jail on a criminal charge or otherwise: "Incomunicado" which means that the prisoner is deprived of all intercourse with anyone—lawyers, friends or relatives. It is a powerful weapon in the hands of the judges, or the prison authorities, and in the case of newspapermen or poor foreigners who would otherwise communicate with their representatives.

A certain Manuel Batiz was left in Belem 4 months "incomunicado" Juan Garduno 7 months, Luis Torres 2 years. Two years ago the newspapers published the story of the discovery of a man who had been in Belem for 20 years, waiting as he himself said, for an accusation of some kind. The Czar Porfirio Diaz in his infinite kindness pardoned the poor man.

Here are some examples of the carelessness, incompetence and utter disregard of the first principles of justice.

An inmate of the penitentiary, 16 years old, was

sentenced, although innocent, with scarcely a hearing, to ten years imprisonment for homicide. He protested and asked for a trial or a hearing as he was ready to prove his innocence and even to indicate the real name of the murderer. They told him to shut up or he would fare worse.

Another was sentenced to death for killing his sweetheart. After 11 years of Belem the trial ended and as he had been sentenced to death they commuted the sentence to 20 years. But they did not count the 11 years served, so that in realty he is serving 31 years. When his lawyer spoke to the minister of justice to rectify this injustice he answered Solomon-like: "*for those who are within the law, everything; for those who put themselves outside of the law, not even air!*"

Another was sentenced to eight years for manslaughter. When his brother was caught 3 years later as an accomplice, the case was revised and he was then condemned to death. His lawyer went to see the minister of justice to repeal the sentence, as being illegal. The minister replied: "*Generosity is an attribute of weak men; strong men always use severity!*"

Another case was that of a Frenchman, 45 years old, who had drawn \$50,000 on a Parisian bank, where his note was not honored. As the case was a civil one he was discharged by the court of jurisdiction. Thereupon the judge of the criminal court with a stroke of the pen sentenced him to 9 years in prison. He was transferred to the penitentiary where he was kept rigorously "incomunicado" being therefore unable either to defend himself or to communicate with his minister.

Another, although innocent was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. Later they discovered the real culprit and then he was set at liberty with the warning: "Don't make any scandal, or you'll be put back in jail for life.

## DEPARTMENT OF POLICE IN MEXICO.

Notwithstanding the corruption surrounding the chief of police, who is a nephew of Porfirio Diaz, he is the best man in the department and one of the best men they ever had. He is a quiet man, is unassuming and unostentatious, and tries to do what he conceives his duty as he conceives it. Nevertheless, he is playing his little part in politics, for Felix Diaz is a very ambitious man. On the other hand the department of secret police or better called the department of detectives or plain clothes men, is composed of the riff-raff, the dregs of criminal Mexico; among its members are professional murderers and thieves.

The judges know so well the unconditional protection offered to them by Porfirio Diaz that they believe and make the poor and unfortunate seekers of justice believe that they are infallible.

Here is a case to illustrate my assertion. One night some ticket speculators quarreled with some detectives who promptly took them to the police station. Next day they testified before a Judge who inquired where they had their last drink before their quarrel. They named a certain well-known restaurant. The judge without investigating whether the bar was closed imposed a fine of \$200 on the proprietor of the restaurant. This man brought his witnesses and even the policeman on the beat, who testified that the bar was closed and that only the restaurant was open, which was according to law. The secretary for the governor of the district was not in the slightest degree impressed by this array of evidence, but as the oracle of the federal district he declared "*Although I know that you are right, it matters not, the word of the judge is infallible.*"

We all know that there is a Pope who is infallible in matters religious, but Mexico had to reveal to us infallible judges.

Let us see now how far the infallibility of the judges

of the supreme court can stand the strain when it is a question of influential and fearless foreigners.

A few years ago an electric lighting concern (a Canadian corporation) needed a piece of land for the installation of electric posts. The Mexican gentlemen who owned the land saw in this a great opportunity to hold up this wealthy corporation. This lot was almost a parallelogram and the company needed for its purpose only one corner, a triangle, about one tenth of the whole. The owners of the land offered the whole lot at say \$x a square meter, but the president of the company declined to buy the whole, and offered instead to buy the corner at the price stated. Then the aforementioned gentlemen very cunningly decided to sell the triangle, but at a price which would be equivalent to that of the whole. This the president of the corporation refused to accept. The case was carried up to the supreme court, which decided that the owners of the land were in the right to ask such a price and condemned the lighting company to pay it.

The lawyer for the corporation came one morning to see its president informing him that the case has been decided against him, and that if he did not pay the price agreed upon, the supreme court would condemn the property of the lighting company to pay for the settlement of the case. The president of the corporation answered that he did not care what the supreme court might do, as the case was a flagrant violation of the law, and that if the condemnation should take place the press of Europe and of America would publish this news as a specimen of Mexican justice. The frightened lawyer went post-haste to Mr. Limantour who realizing the international importance of the case informed Porfirio Diaz about it.

The president had a hurried meeting with the judges of the supreme court and the result was a reversal of the case to the original equitable basis.

*Moral:* If you are at the head of a rich corporation in Mexico, even the supreme court will reverse its

judgments, but if you are only an insignificant restaurant keeper, an unjust sentence will be called infallible.

Here is another incident illustrating how the political camarilla in Mexico can and does sometimes get out of the control of the iron hand of the Czar.

The same corporation, noticed that they were losing enormous quantities of electric power. After careful investigation they discovered that the leak happened near a mill operated in the outskirts of Mexico City. They tapped and measured the power at the pole nearest to the mill and after having figured out, they found that although the mill was lighted and run by electricity the manager only paid for a fraction of the power, which loss to the corporation amounted to \$45,000. The president of the corporation made his accusation to a judge and sent out a warrant for the arrest of the manager of the mill. Next morning some Mexican gentlemen prominent in the finances and politics came to see the president of the corporation begging him to stop proceedings against the mill manager as a favor to Gen. Diaz, adding that they were willing to pay the full amount of the losses incurred by the corporation. The president of the company accepted the settlement and forthwith went to the judge who had taken up his case asking him to drop it. The judge became arrogant and refused to do this, accordingly the president began making his accusation, naming all the directors and owners of the mill interested in the affair. When the judge heard the names of the influential and prominent men implicated in the process, and realized the importance of the whole business, he refused to go on with the case. Then the president became angry at this ignorant and foolish judge, he threatened to go after him if he did not do his duty, whereupon the judge reluctantly resumed the case. Next morning there appeared in the company's office, togged up in the full uniform of aide-de-camp, the royal valet to the president, who informed the president of the lighting company that the president wanted him to know



that the emisary of the President was lying when he asked for leniency in the president's name in the case of the tapping of the power of the mill. That it would be agreeable to the president if the company should continue the proceedings against the mill directors or owners.

The manager and assistant manager of the mill were sentenced to Belem, the directors who knew about the whole affair and were directly responsible for it went scot-free. A year after the sentence the widow of the manager of the mill came to see the president of the lighting company, saying that her husband had died in jail and begged for money to pay for the funeral expenses and for her trip home back to Spain. The president paid for the funeral expenses and for the trip to Spain. Imagine his discomfiture when he discovered later that the manager of the mill had not died, but was in Spain healthy as may be and that he had paid for the funeral expenses of a dummy who had been impersonating the mill manager through the political influence of the mill owners and directors.

#### LEY FUGA. (RUNAWAY LAW.)

The "Ley Fuga" or Runaway Law is no law at all but a Mexican euphonism. It has been in practice the last two or three generations. Bandits infected the country like a plague, so when they were caught and conducted from one place to another on trial, they usually tried to escape and then they were shot. This natural impulse to run away was cleverly used by the governors, jefes politicos, etc., to get rid of their enemies. For instance a prominent rancher or influential person wanted to get rid of an enemy or the lover of a girl on whom they had cast their lustful eyes, then they would simply accuse the unfortunate man of some imaginary criminal offence. The accused was on some pretext or other taken from one prison to another from village to village. On the way, the rurales or

country police would let him go ahead and then shoot him in the back. . On their return to the village they would declare that the prisoner had tried to escape and that he had been shot in the attempt. If they had to appear before a judge they would describe how the prisoner had attacked them, shot at them and while running away had been killed. To prove their assertion they brought forward a grey hat perforated by a bullet hole and a saddle with the same perforation, according to testimony. The strange part of the affair is that the same grey hat and the same saddle are used over and over again in each case of the kind.

Originally the "Ley Fuga" was an unsuccessful attempt to get rid of the bandits. Porfirio Diaz got rid of them by either having them shot on the spot or by offering them better pay to enter the government service as rurales. This way he gathered an excellent corps of men, inured to all kinds of fatigue and strenuous work and who kept the country in order. Porfirio Diaz believed in the old adage that it takes a thief to catch a thief.

There are no more bandits in Mexico, but the "Ley Fuga" is still in full vigor; it is used for private vengeance, for political purposes and is one of the most dangerous, cowardly and execrable weapons used by Diaz and his political mafia.

#### QUINTANA ROO, THE MEXICAN SIBERIA.

Despotic Mexico without its Siberia would not be complete or perfect as a political machine. But the brain of Porfirio Diaz ever fertile in expedients and loopholes found a good excuse in the Maya rebellions in Yucatan to cut about half of the state to make it a federal district, so as to be able to keep there constantly a few thousand soldiers. The Valle nacional is used as the Russians use Siberia to send their political prisoners, with this difference; that many prisoners escape from Siberia to tell the tale, but no one sent to

Yucatan for a few years has ever come back. It is the most unhealthy, marshy, feverish, and pestiferous spot in Mexico. The chances against the prisoners are greater than against the roulette wheel, with the two O's and the eagle. If the execrable food does not kill you, either a sun stroke, yellow fever or some other dreadful tropical disease will do it. Should you, as a prisoner be tough or lucky enough to survive, they apply another form of the *ley fuga* to you. The officer or sergeant in charge of the soldiers will make friends with you, and suggest a very easy way of escaping; if you are innocent or anxious enough to do so, the soldiers who are always watching you, have orders to shoot you, even if you should leave the rank and file to get a drink at a nearby fountain. If all the coaxing is unavailable, then you are offered the means of committing suicide, but should you refuse this kindness, then they help you to kill yourself, or in plain English they assassinate you without more ado, for a doomed man who will not take a diplomatic hint, ought to be killed like a mere dog.

In 1904 a young man named Palomar Serrano, aged 20 years, during the convention of the "Liberal Jacobines" who were celebrating the anniversary of the death of Juarez at the Arbeu Theatre, got up and said: "I come to indict the great criminal Porfirio Diaz." He had no time to say another word, as he was arrested by order of the chief of police, next day, without any trial he was sent to Yucatan for three years.

Here is another example of justice which reminds one of the 12th century justice in the Italian principalities.

A well known general, who lives in Mexico, had, as they say, a misfortune in the family; his daughter had eloped with the family coachman. The daughter was sent back home and later married a very respectable officer. But the ambitious coachman was sent to Yucatan—where his bones are now rotting in the torrid sun of Quintana Roo.

When a man of talent or of a certain political influ-

ence has attacked Porfirio Diaz or the administration in articles or speeches, and he cannot be punished by the ley fuga or exiled to Yucatan, they resort to several underhand ways to discredit him.

Newspapermen are often arrested in the midst of the night, without a warrant or an order from a judge, just on the invitation of a police officer or a policeman. The wife of a journalist was without news from her husband for over a fortnight, until she appealed to the director of El Diario for information.

A well known author and lawyer was writing a book on the actual political situation in Mexico. As soon as this was known to the authorities they accused him of contempt of court. The case was not decided either way, but was kept pending over the author's head like a sword of Damocles.

As soon as the book was published and it was seen that several prominent men in politics were attacked in it, the case of contempt of court was fished out and the man was indicted.

It is a frequent happening in Mexico to see a man enter Belem on a trumped up charge and stay there a year or longer. During this time the rumor is circulated that the man has either stolen money or has committed some criminal deed. After a certain time the person in question is brought before a judge and the case dismissed for want of proofs, but the man is discredited and ruined for life without appeal or redress of any kind. A year ago at a vaudeville show an actor impersonating a monkey, playfully put on his head a cap of a policeman standing nearby. He was arrested, kept in jail all day and fined \$10. When they asked the chief of police the reason for this severity he retorted: "that the aforesaid action was derogatory to the dignity of the police."

We shall see that the word "derogatory" is only a felicitous rhetorical figure by the chief of police. I shall mention two incidents which prove that when the offenders are influential men, this most honor-

able police "derogates" and pockets the insults, as in the Mikado.

A year ago the son of the minister of justice *slapped* and *insulted* the chief of the secret police for giving out a story of an amateur bull fight in honor of some prostitutes. He was not arrested nor fined nor even reprimanded.

Two years ago the son of a millionaire valet to Porfirio Diaz, insulted, slapped and kicked a policeman who had dared order him out of a cafe after the closing hour. At the police station as soon as he was identified he was released immediately. Next day his father, who claims to despise all newspapers, came to the office of El Diario and begged the director as a favor not to give any further notoriety to the case, as, he said "I have sent my son for a year to Paris, *as a punishment.*" Why not to Belem.?

A few months later a young man, unfortunate because his father was not a royal valet, committed the same offence against another policeman. He was not sent to Paris—but to Belem for two years. Thus they mete out justice in Mexico, the land of contradictions.

After thirty years of the corrupting, nefarious, harmful and secretive work of the government on the one hand and on the other of the official and unofficial publicity of the wonderful progress of Mexico, Porfirio Diaz felt that the time had arrived when the the Mexican nation deserved the same standing as foreign nations. He thought also, that the faith in the ability and honorability of the administration of Porfirio Diaz should be given a sort of vote of confidence by foreigners in the matter of incorporation of large mining, agricultural and land companies; foreign nations having shown their respect and their admiration toward Porfirio Diaz by showering medals and orders on him and on his family. Unfortunately the foreign investor is more careful of his con-

fidence and money than foreign nations, so that when Porfirio Diaz used his Minister of Fomento to initiate a so-called mining law, the full, sincere and almost frank opinion of the foreign investor came back to the old despot as a surprise and as a keen disappointment.

This famous so-called mining law, was initiated ostensibly for the purpose of preventing foreigners from acquiring mining property in Mexico; but in reality to force them to incorporate their companies, not as they do now under the laws of the United States, England, France, Germany, etc, but under Mexican laws and under the jurisdiction of Mexican courts. A flood of protests came from all over the world and also threats that no more capital would be invested in Mexico under this law. This stopped the propaganda of the law which was finally killed, the Minister of Fomento taking all the odium for this initiative upon his shoulders.

The foreign investor argued thus: We are willing to invest our millions in Mexico for our benefit and for the benefit of that country, but we will not take any risks or chances at the hands of Mexican justice as it now exists. Porfirio Diaz might be favorable and equitable toward foreigners and foreign investments, but a government which relies on one man for its justice is not a stable government. What if Porfirio Diaz should die and his system should continue? Who could guarantee the honorability, equity and friendliness of his successor toward foreigners and foreign capital?

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Martyrdom is never barren, because every man sees  
on the martyr's brow a line of his own duty.

MAZZINI.

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## The Press in Mexico.

A free press is the detective of a nation.

The press of Mexico had to comedown to the level of the Diaz government and with three exceptions, "La Opinion" of Vera-Cruz, "La Revista de Merida" in Merida, and El Diario del Hogar, Mexico, D. F., all the newspapers are in the pay of the government or of the governors, and if they are hostile to the government it is because they belong to the conservative or clerical party, which, in spite of the opinion of many Mexicans, is still a very powerful and dangerous element.

Up to the first term of Porfirio Diaz there was a free press. Even the constitution of 1824 in article 31, allowed the publication of political opinions. The constitution of 1857 said in article 7—"the press must respect public life, morality and public peace. Transgression of the law by the press shall be judged by two juries, one to determine the guilt, and another which shall apply the law and indicate the penalty."

In this manner those who framed the law had fully protected the press with two juries independent of each other.

The Gonzalez administration reformed article 7, precisely in the clause which the lawmakers had so carefully provided for the protection of the press. This clause which I have underlined above, was reformed thus: "*The crimes committed by the press, shall be judged by competent tribunals of the federation, or of the states, of the federal district and the territory of Lower California, according to their special legislation.*"

Just the little change, that the tribunals, or, better said, a judge instead of two juries shall decide. It looks like a trifle, but it was of the utmost importance for the administration to have to deal with their own

corrupt judges whom they could command at will, instead of two juries who might disagree or become independent.

"Since 1884 the free press has been abolished and newspapermen have suffered all possible and imaginable vexations—everything even censorship would be preferable to the actual state, where one does not know when and how one transgresses the law." (1)

The same writer goes on to say: "But in Mexico where everything is abnormal, there does not exist a law applicable to the press. The government preferred not to legislate about it so as to be able to oppress all the better." (2)

While there is no law in Mexico against the offences of the press, every such transgression can be put down under the title: "Crimes against reputation." of the penal code, third book, chapter one. "Injury-Defamation—Extra judicial calumny." Article 642. "Defamation consists: in communicating deceitfully to one or more persons, the imputation of a true or false act, determined or undetermined, which might dishonor or discredit or expose to contempt the person referred to."

In this manner, everything from a newspaper article to a telephone message, a sign or even a "hieroglyphic" (sic), is liable to be considered an act of defamation. In the United States and in other civilized countries, you are not guilty under the libel laws if you can prove your imputation. But in Mexico if you accuse a public or private person, for example, of thieving and can prove it, you go to jail all the same. A few years ago it happened that a newspaperman accused a government official of embezzlement and actually proved the charge. The official a well known general, was dismissed from his post, but the newspaperman went to jail for three months.

In most of the states the governors have enacted

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(1) Una Campana Politica, Pag. 105.

(2) Una Campana Politica, Pag. 109.

special laws for the sake of muzzling, suppressing and extirpating the press. Under the title of crimes against reputation IX. the penal code of Yucatan says that, "in the offences against the state; to prosecute, it is not necessary that the slandered person should have been mentioned by its full name, it is sufficient to indicate the initials, or an incorrect and disfigured allusion of the name, or by certain suggestions of time, place, profession, manner, characteristic signs, etc."

In the case of any infraction of the law, by a newspaper article, everybody from the proprietor, manager or city editor, down to the office boy, often even the newsboys, all are sent in a body to jail, and the type, machinery, all the paraphernalia is dumped into the street. This has happened innumerable times, not only in every state of Mexico but also in the federal district. Sometimes the newspaper editor and publisher, as in Mexico generally the manager is both publisher and editor, is advised to skip the city or the country, oftener he does not receive any warning and then the whole staff goes to jail. In Belem there is a hole called the "editors cell" which is almost always inhabited by journalists under accusations.

I once saw in Belem one of these martyrs, walking about in his full dress suit he had been wearing when arrested, and he had been in prison for three whole weeks in that most inappropriate costume. Some of the most irrepressible newspapermen continue doing their work even in jail, with pen as well as with pencil. Not satisfied with enacting all sorts of vexatious laws against them, Porfirio Diaz uses his henchmen to persecute and hound newspapermen, after which he will ostentatiously and magnanimously give orders to release them, then offer them money or places in the government, as congressmen or senators. Years ago he founded an official paper paying for the machinery, type, the building and even for the paper. To kill all competition the price charged for this journal was one Mexican cent, or half cent in American money and

consequently its circulation became larger than that of all the other papers combined.

Not content with this, Porfirio Diaz created a monopoly of the manufacture of paper in Mexico, by putting up a high tariff on this product. As a result, the price of paper in Mexico is nearly three times as much as in the United States and is of very inferior quality. This monopoly is in the hands of the government "camarilla" which practically dictates to the newspapers in Mexico. It is easy for them to kill a newspaper; all they have to say, is that they are very sorry, but cannot furnish you with paper on a certain day, and that is usually the end of the publication.

To this arbiter of the press, representative of the official press in Mexico, this ambassador of the press for Porfirio Diaz, has been given this enormous power, on condition that he should kill all competition, that is to say, all the anti-administration papers. With unlimited money at his disposal (the president himself confessing to have spent for the paper over one million dollars in ten years), with the protection of the czar, and immunity as a congressman, the editor of this paper disposed of his rivals.

About two and a half years ago, *El Diario*, an independent newspaper was started. The people of Mexico hailed it with delight, as a new Messiah; they reasoned that the founders and directors of the company being foreigners it would give the newspaper an immunity unknown to the Mexican press.

Mr. Hizar y Haro, who is now director of this paper, who had been one of the secretaries of President Diaz and later a paymaster in the army, is one of the most remarkable men in Mexico. Utterly void of all of the passions characteristic of the Latins, Mr. Hizar seems more like an Anglo-Saxon, calm, dispassionate, ever patient and ready to do justice, unbiased, without prejudices or meanness of any kind; his only flaw is his unconditional admiration of Porfirio Diaz. I can explain this adoration only by his utter ignorance of the

political history of the president, as Hajar has passed all his life in Italy where his father was in the diplomatic service.

Hajar ran the paper as nearly as Jesus Christ would have done it, with this distinction, that the Saviour once got angry and drove the merchants out of the sanctuary. Hajar never got angry and did not attempt to drive the thieves from the temple of justice. Nevertheless under this man's guidance, the paper acquired circulation and a certain prestige, but lost its independence and became a neutral, colorless news sheet.

The founder of El Diario, an Italian and ex-cub reporter of the New York Press is quite as interesting a type. Clever, assimilative, hard working, good looking to a fault, fascinating to men as well as women, this individual possesses many characteristics of both the Neapolitans and the Mexicans; he is diplomatic, with a bold front, but at the bottom of his heart as slippery and timid as an eel, superficial as a tenor, with a womanly intuition akin to talent, he has but a poor knowledge of men and human nature and is petty in his loves and hates. He started on a pittance and then hypnotized an American banker to finance El Diario.

In less than two years El Diario has spent over \$650,000, it is now paying expenses. But at the beginning this paper had to weather all kinds of storms.

The hardest blow to El Diario came from the official press, which did its best to kill it at its inception. An early director of the El Diario had bribed an employee of the telegraph office to furnish our paper with the despatches from Guatemala, which the minister of foreign affairs, Ignacio Mariscal, refused to communicate to us.

When Ignacio Mariscal saw the telegrams from the Mexican minister in Guatemala published in our paper before he had even opened them, first he marveled, and then began to institute proceedings against the director of El Diario for purloining and divulging state secrets. The director being a congressman, had to be

tried by his peers, that is to say congress. The case, as customary was kept pending for several months, during which our advertisers, expecting this to be the death of *El Diario*, refused to renew their contracts, but when it was known that Elihu Root was to visit the country, on the day of his arrival in the capital a spectacle was arranged by Porfirio Diaz, to show this representative of the United States with what justice, tempered with mercy, journalists were treated in Mexico. The farce was exceedingly well played; congress met, and the committee of congressmen who were to pass judgment on the case, declared, that there being no secrets in a republic there could be no state secrets and therefore no accusation; and the director was absolved by unanimous vote.

Later when *El Diario* started printing facts about a sensational failure, there was a hurried summons for our director Hizar y Haro to go to the office of the minister of finances J. Y. Limantour, who very politely but firmly begged him to desist from "insinuations" in the affair, promising that the court would bring the culprits to the bar where they would be dealt with according to law. But everybody, even the last cub-reporter on *El Diario* knew that the culprit who had robbed and failed for millions, was in hiding at the hacienda of a partner of Porfirio Diaz; everybody knew that the publication of the truth about the affair would involve the camarilla of President Diaz and Limantour in another small Panama scandal and that the guilty man was not to be and never would be brought to justice, and the courts have never touched and never will touch this ticklish matter in spite of Limantour's promises.

A short but polite note to the director of our paper from the secretary of the president, always did the trick, stopping our best stories. We knew quite well that the exquisitely polite request from the secretary of the president was almost an order and equivalent to the pencil of the censor.

When a certain Spaniard, keen, unscrupulous a typical financial bandit, was arrested on the charge of embezzlement, we received a visit from the manager of the San Rafael paper monopoly, and were asked not to publish the news of the arrest, and the *Diario* complied, feeling that this request was practically a threat.

When *El Diario* thought of publishing, as a matter of news, the names of the gilded youths, sons of the most influential men in Mexico, with the story of a bull fight they had held in honor of some low strumpets, with the official assistance of the soldiers, police, and firemen, these youngsters headed by the son of the minister of justice and another man, millionaire and amateur bull fighter, brought pressure on the management of the paper monopoly to cut off our supply of paper in the event of our publishing the story.

Once when *El Diario* published an account of an outrageous and arbitrary imprisonment of all the people at a dance even to the musicians of the orchestra; the chief of police called our director to his office asking him if we had any grudge against him!

Any attack on any government department or any official is taken as a personal insult, and very often a duel follows.

When *El Diario* published a criticism of a work of the minister of education Manuel Sierra, one of his secretaries came to the office asking how we dared criticize his Honor the minister!

As soon as the President places a governor or any man in a government position, these men seem to think that they are there by the grace of God and do not brook the slightest criticism, no matter how just.

Honest men have claimed that in a government the officials must live as in a house of crystal; the Mexican government officials know that they are living in glass houses and they demand therefore that none should throw stones at them. All you can do is to throw bouquets at them; they accept all compliments, all the

flatteries, no matter how fulsome and coarse, and gush over them like old maids when complimented on their wilted charms.

If *El Diario* had accepted all the money offered for stopping the campaigns it had started against greedy and unscrupulous corporations, it would not now need any help from the Mexican government.

The most aggressive and violent campaign was conducted against a street car company, an American company. The number of killed and maimed in a year by the street cars reached the appalling figure of 765, as the company refused to spend any money on fenders. I suggested going after the cabinet ministers to force them to bring pressure on the management of the corporation, but at this suggestion the president and the director of *El Diario* suffered suddenly from an attack of cold feet, from which they have not yet recovered.

Although Porfirio Diaz and his clique and all the governors have tried with all their might to eradicate the opposition press, it always crops up as irrepressible and incorrigible as ever.

They have beaten, kicked into submission, bought off, and murdered hundreds of newspapermen; these martyrs and heroes of a hopeless cause; and still the tribe cannot be stamped out, to the disgust and despair of the administration.

Before every fake reelection, which is enacted every six years, like the military manoeuvres, there is a general expedition over the country, to capture, imprison and destroy all the independent newspapers, in the manner of the police of New York, who arrest all the pickpockets and thieves to be found in the city before a holiday.

In 1902 to kill all opposition for the coming election. The following newspapers were persecuted or subjected to trial on various trivial excuses.



IN MEXICO CITY:

1. El Hijo del Ahuizote.
2. El Paladin.
3. Onofrof.
4. El Alacran.
5. La Nacion Espanola.
6. El Diario del Hogar.
7. El Universal.

IN GUADALAJARA:

8. Juan Panadero.
9. La Tarantula.
10. Diogenes.
11. Jalisco Libre.
12. La Libertad.
13. El Correo de Jalisco

IN MORELIA:

14. La Gaceta.
15. El Corsario.

IN HERMOSILLO.

16. El Sol.
17. La Luna.
18. La Libertad.
19. El Democrata.
20. El Combate.

IN DURANGO.

21. La Evolucion.

IN IRAPUATO.

22. El Avance.

IN ZACATECAS.

23. El Sentinela.

IN PACHUCA.

24. El Desfanatizador.

IN GUANAJUATO.

25. El Barretero.

26. El Sable.

IN SAN LUIS POTOSI.

27. La Opinion Publica.

28. El Demofilo.

IN MATEGUALA.

29. La Avispa.

30. El Democrata.

31. El Progreso.

IN MONTEREY:

32. La Democracia Latina.

33. La Redencion.

34. Justicia y Constitucion.

IN LINARIS. N. L.

35. El Trueno.

IN CHIHUAHUA.

36. La Voz de Altamirano.

IN TEZUITLAN. CA.

37. El Cuarto. Poder.

IN TAMPICO:

38. Balaraza.

39. Oja Blanca

This is only a partial black list of this newspaper morgue. In this period coincides the persecution of the liberal clubs, which in that year were suppressed by General Bernardo Reyes, then minister of war, by order of Porfirio Diaz.

On January 24th a Mexican Congressman, then on his way to the north, left in San Luis Potosi, a well-known Mexican General and Governor of a State, who, accompanied by some soldiers disguised as peasants, entered the political club Ponciano Arriaga

and there created a scandal for the purpose of having the directors of this club arrested and landed in jail. This club was recognized by all the other liberal clubs (existing then in all the principal cities in Mexico) as the head and the centre of the confederation of all the liberals.

In this manner Porfirio Diaz killed the liberal organization at the source of power. This is also the way the old hypocrite prepares for *a general and unanimous election by the will of the people*.

Napoleon Bonaparte who was a genius, declared once that if he allowed a free press in France under his regime, he would not last three weeks.

Porfirio Diaz who is not a genius, except for chicanery and inquisition, would last just about three days with a free press in Mexico.

Bolivia represents for the president an ideal state of affairs; there, General Arce published a decree in the "Diario Oficial": "The Press is at liberty to write about everything, excepting religion and the government."

The president's dream would be a press without commentaries, just news from all over the world, and what the government would kindly allow to be published, with the addition of hymns and hosannas in his honor

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Anyone can be a pilot in fine weather.

BACON.

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## Political Parties.

When we say political parties we use a conventional word, for in Mexico, as will easily be understood, there are not and cannot subsist political parties, since for more than thirty years the same individual has ruled as absolute master. To the existence of political parties there must concur a public spirit or opinion—and this Porfirio Diaz killed at the beginning of his political career.

Mexican society was divided, during many years, into two contending parties; on the one hand the reactionary party, headed by the clergy and supported by the army, the Spaniards and by those who had aristocratic pretensions; on the other the liberal party, republican with revolutionary tendencies, represented by the most talented men in the country, also the middle class, which as everywhere, manifested the strongest impulses and highest ideals.

The reactionary party, defeated by Benito Juarez in the bloody contest called the three years war (1857-60), brought about French Intervention and the lugubrious experiment of the Empire, ending in the killing of Maximilian of Austria. With the death of the Emperor and his two most prominent followers, the reactionary party was vanquished and disorganized; nevertheless as the clergy was still left standing, they took good care to keep the fire glowing under the ashes, and in silence and mystery began acquiring wealth and building anew, without taking an active part in politics, but preparing to become a powerful factor at the first opportunity, that is to say when Porfirio Diaz shall die.

The liberal party became disorganized after the triumph of General Diaz, and he has taken care to choke it lingeringly, without killing it outright, as he needed it

to check the impetus of the reactionaries if they should unmask their batteries.

The heads of the old liberal party disappeared either by natural death or by assassination, as I have shown; the rest are in a state of mental and physical decrepitude. Generals Corona, Garcia de la Cadena, Mejia, Regules, Escobedo, J. N. Mendez and all those who figured in the campaigns against the reactionaries and the Empire, are all dead, with the exception of Porfirio Diaz. The apostles of liberty, Ignacio Ramirez, Ignacio Altamirano, Guillermo Prieto, Riva Palacio, Zamacona etc. have all perished during the long reign of Diaz. Two men are left, Ignacio Mariscal and Felix Romero, both are mumified, one in the foreign office, the other in the supreme court. Both are honorable and honest men, whose only blunder was to be deceived by the Great Mystifier.

The clerical party keeps and increases its influence by the press, having good newspapers in the capital and in the states; on the other hand the liberal party has lost its representatives in the press, some having been sold to Porfirio Diaz and others having had to suspend their publications on account of the persecutions of the government; the only one which outlived them was "El Diario del Hogar", leading a life full of tribulations and anxieties, its heroic director Filomeno Mata having suffered repeated imprisonments.

The following incident will exemplify the insidious and treacherous ways used by the clericals to suppress opposition or liberalism in their midst.

In 1901 a priest called Joachin Perez, 50 years old, wrote to Monsignor Averardi, apostolic delegate, letters in which he begged for the modification of the high tariff for the administration of the sacraments. The petition was signed by thousands of Catholics. Monsignor Averardi diplomatically answered that he would consult with the Pope. But instead of so doing, the Archbishop of Puebla and the Monsignor, gave a private dinner to Mucio Martinez, governor of Puebla, and con-

vinced him that Perez was hatching a political conspiracy. By order of the governor the unfortunate priest was attacked in his parish at Alixco, at midnight, beaten and then taken to jail. All his property and chattels were confiscated and although suffering from rheumatism, he was kept in confinement for over fourteen months. Eventually through the efforts of his sister who went to beg the intervention of her uncle Ignacio Mariscal, he was freed.

A great deal has been said about the "Scientific Party", this however has never existed as a party since it does not deserve the name. It would be more adequate to call this group of political speculators, united to exploit the nation, the "scientific grafters".

This group is headed by J. Y. Limantour, the minister of finances, co-worker, partner and accomplice of Porfirio Diaz in all the unsavory deals. It is formed by various improvised economists, who plagiarized Leroy Beaulieu and Auguste Comte in the most impudent and barefaced manner. They are all clever and intelligent though perhaps too much so. They form a sort of Chinese wall around the minister of finances, who is their Pactolus, so that anyone not of the ring cannot bathe in its golden waters. They are lawyers, bankers, and newspapermen, and no business of any importance can be arranged with the government nor prosper in the press, nor get justice in the tribunals, without sanction from this moneyed oligarchy. This group emboldened by success, pretended to elevate to the presidency its chief Limantour, not on a political question, but solely on a business principle, to continue indefinitely and on a greater scale its work of exploitation.

Here is the inside history of how Limantour lost the vice-presidency through an indiscretion at a five o'clock tea. The members of the "cientificos" or scientific group had convinced the president of the political necessity of visiting Europe and the United States in the manner of Gen. Grant. The argument was that such

a trip would not only enhance the prestige of the country by advertising the president's name all over the world, but likewise the foreign nations would then see, that Porfirio Diaz could leave Mexico in peace with Limantour as vice-president.

President Diaz felt safe as far as Limantour was concerned, expecting to leave Gen. Reyes in the war office as a counter-weight on the balance of this political game. But Limantour told the secret to his wife, who in her joy could not resist confiding to some of her lady friends "that the next five o'clock tea would take place in the Castle Chapultepec." These two women ran post-haste to relate the conversation to Carmelita Diaz, the wife of the president. Carmelita, as she is called by the Mexicans, was very much offended in her dignity and vanity as queen of Mexico; instead of complaining to the president, she did the cleverest thing possible, asking one of the best friends of Porfirio Diaz, Governor Dehesa of Vera-Cruz, to see her; she repeated the incident, adding that "if those people acted so superciliously while still subordinates, what would they do when they should be in power and Porfirio out of the country?" She begged Dehesa to work in her interest and also for his friend Porfirio. Dehesa performed his task so well that he convinced the president of his mistake, and the result was that Dehesa was ordered to call on Limantour to sign a statement revoking his word.

In this "scientific group" figured for a long time as an active lieutenant, a Rosendo Pineda, of whom we will speak later. In opposition to this group is the "Reyist party", which became prominent when its chief General Bernardo Reyes was minister of war. The antecedents of Reyes were not of the kind to make him popular, for there are in his life bloody deeds which render him even more fearful than Porfirio Diaz. But Reyes is not a thief and if he tried to appear as a patriot, a liberal and an ultra-mexican, he was the only man for the moment who could be used to counteract the influ-



ence of the scientific party and Limantour, inasmuch as he represented political ideals opposite to those of his rivals. Reyes created the "Second Reserve", which was a sort of national guard at the service and under the will of the war office. In this second reserve were permitted to join in an official character and with the right to carry sword and uniform, all the citizens who could prove by an examination that they had the rudimentary knowledge expected from a second lieutenant. Workingmen who could pass the requisite examinations were also allowed to join this national reserve as corporals and sergeants. The idea appealed to the masses and awakened wonderful enthusiasm; all understood the meaning of that move and the advantages which could be derived at a moment's notice from such an organization. But Limantour realized the importance of this stroke of policy and as I have said in another chapter, Reyes was eliminated from the ministry and the second reserve was abolished immediately.

The "Reyists" reached the utmost of the resistance and bitterness against Limantour and his "cientificos", in the campaign warred against them. They started newspapers and attacked the "ring" with a courage and a violence up to that date unknown to the Mexican press. Many young men of talent and influence figured in the newspapers. The most prominent of all was Rodolfo Reyes, son of General Reyes, a lawyer of talent, fearless, energetic, cultured, with a spotless private life; he will rise to a high position in the land when the conditions of the country shall have changed, in spite of the fact that he is the son of Gen. Reyes. I once asked him, his and his father's political platform and he answered: "My father and I are working each one for himself, although we have this political ideal in common; we object to mixing business with politics."

The two sons of the then minister of justice, the Baranda boys, were very audacious in their attacks.

The most talented writers were Luis del Toro, Dr. Francisco Martinez Calleja, Jose J. Ortiz, and Diodoro Battalla; they published "El Correo de Mexico" and "La Nacion", and certainly Mexico has never seen such impetuous, masterly, caustic and forceful editorials. Poor Limantour and his "scientific ring" were raked mercilessly over the coals of publicity, and they were stripped of their political hypocrisies to the very skin and bone.

If a five o'clock tea spoiled the vice-presidential chances of Limantour, the editorials of the two above mentioned papers discredited him as a presidential candidate in the eyes of the Mexican public.

In the group of the "Reyists" there was also a minister, Joachin Baranda the most intelligent of all, who exercised a great influence in the states of Campeche and Yucatan, whose governors were his creatures. Teodoro Dehesa, a sort of Mazarin, the most subtle and clever of all the Mexican politicians, was governor of Vera-Cruz, and General Abraham Bandala, nicknamed "the Vandal", governor of the state of Tabasco, so that "Reyism" dominated all the gulf states of Mexico. With the exit of Reyes from the war office and the destruction of the second reserve, the shares of this group, were lowered many points, until it went into a partial slumber. When Porfirio Diaz created the vice-presidency at the suggestion of Washington, the "scientific party" again came into life, attempting to bring pressure on the president so that he should designate Limantour. Unluckily it was too late, for it had been proved that this individual was disqualified from exercising that function by the constitution and although the constitution is no obstacle to Porfirio Diaz, he does not violate it to favor a third party but only for his own personal benefit.

The "Reyists" also tried to intrigue in Reyes' favor, but Gen. Reyes understood the awkwardness and untimeliness of the move and hiding under the

cloak of military discipline. forbade his partisans to imitate the tactless proceedings of the "cientificos."

Porfirio Diaz then freely and spontaneously "elected" Ramon Corral for the vice-presidency, to the utter amazement of the country, for Corral was an unknown factor in politics, a sort of dark horse. This new move brought about a fresh political situation, and as it was thought that Corral would substitute his protector, the desertions began. The "cientificos" imposed as coadjutor to Corral, a Rosendo Pineda, the Jago of the "cientificos", now Corral's Mephisto. This Rosendo Pineda, is from Oaxaca; he was for several years the private secretary to Romero Rubio (father-in-law of Porfirio Diaz) when minister of the interior, and consequently knew all the inside workings of local politics. Lawyer of mediocre quality, indifferent as an orator, he possesses nevertheless great audacity and an insatiable ambition, having built up a false reputation which he exploits to the utmost of his ability. Pineda with the cunning of an Indian and the perspicacity of a lawyer, understood at once the situation and instead of watching Corral to direct him in conformity to the interests of the "cientificos", made a deal with him, pitching his party overboard, to bask and profit in the new rising sun of the political horizon. Corral guided by his intuition and perhaps by the counsels of Pineda, did not give much importance to the vice-presidency, limiting himself to be a secretary in the presidential cabinet, blindly obedient to his chief and attending to his private business, which has yielded him an enormous fortune, and waiting calmly for time to resolve the question. He is not popular in Mexico; no man would be allowed to become popular or to create a party of his own, for Porfirio Diaz would start his underground machinery to destroy such a one.

Corral is in a most difficult position, second to a man who does not permit any political star to outshine his own sun. Nevertheless one cannot help admiring

his tact, his silence, the art of doing the right thing at the right time, his ability to pilot the vice-presidential skiff over the breakers which have destroyed so many politicians. He is endowed with a sense of humor, sagacity and character and he should be judged only after he has been president. In the years I have passed in Mexico I have heard many disparaging remarks and superficial judgments about the man; only once did I hear a true, just and impartial appreciation of him from a Mexican, a talented young liberal, all the more remarkable as this man was not in politics and owed nothing to Corral.

In short, there are no political parties in Mexico, only small personal groups, which, circumstances permitting, will be used as a nucleus to form real parties.

As a result of the perfidious declarations of Porfirio Diaz to Creelman in Pearson's Magazine, assuring him that under no circumstances would he accept another presidential term, many Mexicans fell into this trap, innocently believing the protestation of the old fox, and began promoting the formation of parties to take part in the next electoral fight. This electoral struggle is an impossibility, because even if Porfirio Diaz really should not crave reelection, he would never consent to a man not of his own making sitting in the presidential chair. What was self-evident to anybody knowing the hoary old Michiavelli, happened, and that is, that Porfirio Diaz graciously condescended to accept reelection and in view of this, those who dreamt of leading in the next campaign, are satisfied to accept the job of head supers, orchestra leaders, and chiefs of choruses, making believe they are organizing independent political clubs, not to elect (?) a president, as this is not even under discussion, but to elect the vice-president designated by President Diaz. There is no conduct more ignoble, more cowardly than that of these sicarii who wish to appear before the people wearing the seamless tunic of the apostles. Porfirio Diaz following his wise system "that to divide is to rule" has made

Reyes believe that he might be the next vice-president. Reyes answered this pretended offer in an very commonplace interview, putting himself unconditionally at the orders of his superior. Seven editorials in "La Patria" killed the candidacy of Creel; the only one left now is Corral, who continues his policy of silence, in his shell, like an Indian fakir.

Porfirio Diaz has no more idea of relinquishing power, than I have of becoming president of Patagonia; he has no intention of slackening the reins of his iron rule, to help the democrats or the liberals or the Mexicans in general to learn how to govern themselves. He will die in the presidential chair like an insect stuck on fly paper. Meanwhile the work of evolution is slowly but surely taking place, the younger generations with higher ideals than those of Porfirio Diaz and his cronies or the greedy "cientificos" are taking notes of the show unfolding under their eyes. Young Mexico will have a say, as soon as the storm of reaction shall have blown away after Diaz's death. Two young men with talent and devoted friends will then play a prominent part: Rodolfo Reyes and Emeterio de la Garza. The latter has all the attributes of leadership; he is loyal to his friends, talented, a clever speaker and writer, excessively bold and fearless, intelligent and always ready to face any situation, no matter how hopeless and discouraging. As the noisiest always attract attention, these two young men will impose themselves in spite of their youth. Others of the younger generation full of talent, patriotism and honesty of purpose will help to direct the future destiny of Mexico. Some of these are Diodoro Battalla, the most talented orator and patriot in the country, Diaz Miron, Joachin Clausel, Gabriel Gonzalez Mier, Ignacio de la Pena, Carlos Pereyra.

The clerical party which has received its greatest support from Carmelita Diaz during the present regime, will have to look out for its laurels if it does not mend its short-sighted ways, since a continuation of the old, narrow-minded policy will have for effect a schism of

the liberal Catholics in Mexico from the mother church in Rome.

The situation after the death of Porfirio Diaz will be at the start a race for the presidency between Corral and General Reyes, if Porfirio Diaz insists in putting Corral as a vice-president. Corral will prove his mettle in the first three weeks after the death of the president, for the "cientificos" consider Reyes not only their greatest enemy, but a danger and a menace to the state. I have heard several of these "cientificos" talk about Reyes's assassination, not only as an outcome of the rivalry but as a political necessity. Now Reyes knows this perfectly well and he lives on a mountain, in a castle called "El Mirador" like a mediaeval robber baron, ready to swoop on to Mexico like a bird of prey. He is over 60 and is extremely ambitious to be president; if he has to choose between being assassinated or snatching the presidency from Corral, the guesses might be in his favor. Should he start from Monterrey with 25 men he would reach Mexico City with an army of 25,000. Nevertheless and no matter who will be president, a continuation of the present methods is not possible and will not be permitted by the people in general. They are all tired and sick of those perverse and injurious methods, and if they have stood Porfirio Diaz so long, it is not because of cowardice, but because they expected him to die almost ten years ago, and being disappointed in this, have not thought that the assassin's dagger would help matters or improve their conditions.

Everybody is weary of this protracted, tiresome farce of a perpetual, seemingly immortal, peripathetic candidate for the presidency; they are anxiously watching for a sign of mental and physical decay in the countenance of this apparently indestructible oppressor, whose best ally has been death, for it refused to take a life as helpful in exterminating lives, as conflagrations, epidemics or earthquakes. They pray for an end to this endless career and gaze at the lines and wrinkles of that impassive mask for a prophecy of a speedy close.

“We have had enough of him” said a Mexican to me once. “But” I exclaimed “he cannot possibly live more than two years.”—“Don’t deceive yourself”, replied my friend “one of these days when Porfirio shall feel the icy touch of death upon his shoulder, he will hastily pick up a pen and *publish a decree to live another twenty years*”.





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As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.

PROVERBS. XXIII. 7.

You can't overturn a pyramid, but you can undermine it; that's what I have been trying to do.

A. LINCOLN.

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## Porfirio Diaz.

What manner of person is this Porfirio Diaz? Official admiration and servility, sycophancy, at times well-meaning eulogy and above all foreign ignorance, have all contributed to the formation of an astonishing legend, the creation of a surprising myth surrounding this individual, so that a fair, searching and dispassionate analysis seems almost like an iconoclastic attitude.

He has been labeled the greatest statesman of modern times; more eminent than Bismark; superior in generalship to Caesar, Alexander and Bonaparte; more transcendental than Washington and Lincoln; purer in his patriotism than Mazzini or Garibaldi; more subtly diplomatic than Leo XIII or Talleyrand; as God-like as Christ, Buddha and Sri Krishna, and he has been addressed as the greatest thing in America, beside the Amazon and the Andes. (sic). In 1899 two Latin-American journalists had a discussion as to which would excite greater public attention, the account of a great scientific discovery or a eulogy on some great man. To test the matter one published as news the story of a wonderful invention affecting the cultivation of cane sugar, the other published an interview with Tolstoy panegyrising Porfirio Diaz. Both were fictions made out of the whole cloth. The former passed unnoticed, but the latter was reproduced in every paper in the land and has been quoted in the life of Porfirio Diaz as a strong argument for his continuance in power.

To an honest man all this indiscriminate lying, coarse flattery is nauseating, to a humorous person it is idiotic, to the intelligent it only proves the low mental caliber of Porfirio Diaz and his sycophants.

Physically this man of destiny has been endowed by nature with a perfection almost superhuman. He has cultivated this gift by a wondrously laborious and

strenuous activity. Up to the age of 37 he fought almost incessantly, thereby steeling his muscles, fortifying his constitution by a vigorous, sober and chaste conduct of life. His Indian ancestry gave him the brawn, the Spanish forefathers the brain capacity.

Middle sized, for the excellent proportion of his limbs he seems tall. The hands and feet are large, his gestures measured, calm. The forehead is low, sloping, unintellectual, the eyes beady, piercing, at times kindly and humorous, always observant and suspicious. The nose deformed by the arched, dilated nares, resembles that of a wide-nostriled, snorting horse after a gallop. The chin broad with powerful mandibles, is set and massive as a tortilla grinder; ears large, ungainly, with their elongated lobes, characteristic of long-lived men and races. White hair and mustache, the skin fair, with a constant flush and hectic red patches.

Compare this description with his portrait at the age of 37 or before, the transformation is marvellous, well-nigh incredible. The earliest photos or daguerotypes represent a common, brutal, almost criminal countenance. The shock of black hair, small drooping moustache and chin whiskers, the swarthy skin, make a composite picture of a well dressed pelado and a Japanese valet. What with rubbing, scrubbing, showerbaths, soap and human food he has changed from a greasy condottiere into a full blown white czar, a cross between a low-browed Bismark and an Aztec Cripì.

With a far-reaching purpose he sacrificed everything to his all-absorbing ambition, and like a new Saturn devoured the children of his desires as fast as they appeared. His health, his energy, his time were devoted to the one purpose; what to other men are attractions, distractions and amusements, were swept aside when they did not fall in with his own line of conduct. Gambling, smoking, drinking, women, the theatres, the fine arts, sports, reading, leisure, he renounced to concentrate his energies upon that great game of politics and personal ambition, in which bril-

liancy often fails when a constant plodding, alert attitude will bring success.

Politically an intruder and socially an outcast, Porfirio Diaz slowly climbed the ladder by all available means. His marriage to the daughter of Romero Rubio belonging to one of the best families in Mexico paved the way for social recognition; he attached to his body guard practically as a valet the proud and blue blooded millionaire Pablo Escandon and married his own natural daughter to one of the richest Mexicans in the land. And this ex-maurader and political bandit, whose father the popular legend points to as a priest, whose mother was a Mixed Indian, whose natural offspring he kindly introduced into society, whose son-in-law is a notorious homo-sexual and whose brother-in-law is an alcoholic lawyer and a fearless trollop hunter, now poses as the arbiter of aristocracy in Mexico and decides who-is-who among the upper ten.

He knew better however than to visit Europe and America officially, thereby inviting the homage, the curiosity and the judgment of foreigners, for his wife gave him away once when she answered the insistent query "Why Porfirio did not visit Europe?"—"He is afraid" she remarked "of cutting a poor figure," and then suddenly recalling herself, "because he does not speak foreign languages."

His private life for the last thirty years has been spotless and although surrounded by all the luxuries he has led a life simple as a hermit's; in food and drink abstemious as an Arab, in a country where everybody smokes he has been an exception, where alcoholism is rampant he only tastes water, where everybody goes to bull fights he stays at home; does not visit theatres except at official functions, seldom hunts, never plays. Private life, personal hygiene, hard work, physical and intellectual economy have been concentrated for the prolongation of power through the medium of a perfect body.

All his time, spare moments, are taken up by his

special duties; he does not shirk official drudgery and will attend the unveiling of a monument as punctually as he will receive a caller. He will lend a patient ear to petitions, demands, protestations, adulations; will receive foreign officials and visitors, ministers and consuls, governors, jefes politicos, and will listen to all, silent, attentive, inscrutable, spare of words, ambiguous in his promises, deliberate in speech and in manner. With a keen and instinctive knowledge of men, enhanced by his long experience in office, he is also endowed with a wonderful memory for names and faces, and is a walking encyclopedia of all the people in Mexico; he keeps a watchful eye on every enemy and friend, forgetting sometimes but never pardoning.

When General Reyes of Columbia asked him once if he considered Limantour a great statesman, he answered: "No, because Limantour never forgets his enemies, and in politics one must sometimes forget."

After having disposed of his most dangerous rivals, feeling that wholesale executions could not be the order of the day, he commenced using all the rogues and some of his enemies for his own ends, just as deadly poisons sometimes are employed for medicinal purposes.

He was blest with a great common sense which became distorted by the lens of personal ambition. If selfish ambition warped his native common sense, fear made him commit all the blunders of his political career. Like all people quick to anger, he is not really fearless, for as the jungle song says: "Anger is the egg of fear." Fearful and therefore ever vigilant, he was saved from destruction by this alertness, as the hare is preserved from capture by his long ears.

He mistook cruelty for strength of character and consequently was ever ready to terrorize for fear of being thought weak. As a result of the outrageous nickel law and the payment of the famous English debt in the period of Gonzalez, there happened a mutiny. "Knife them all" suggested Porfirio Diaz to Gonzalez. But Gonzalez was not afraid.

Ambition and fear are the two passions which have ruled Porfirio Diaz in his life-long political career. An ambition, gigantic, ultra egotistic, venal, monopolizing and personal; a fear, the result of this selfish ambition, of a sneakish, pussillanimous and cowardly nature. Last year on the 16th of September, as the Mexican students desired to parade the streets of the capital, they sent their representative, a Mr. Olea, to beg the President's permission. Porfirio Diaz answered: "Yes, but beware, for the Mexicans have revolutionary tendencies lurking in their blood". Think of three scores of youngsters parading unarmed, being a menace to the republic, with 5000 soldiers, rurales and policemen in the capital.

It is only by admitting this shameful well hidden stigma on the apparently brave front of this man, that we can logically explain such despicable and infamous acts, as the massacre of Vera-Cruz and the carnage of Orizaba. He was then, panic stricken, like a wanderer, who shoots wildly at the fleeting phantoms in the night; he was so terrorized that the only means of relieving his blue funk, was to terrorize in return.

Another characteristic of this wooden half breed, painted to look like iron, is his facility to shed tears. I had the opportunity to see him, tears rolling down his cheeks at the recital of a romantic poem by a pretty girl at a public function.

By his enemies he is nicknamed "El lloron de Icamole", the weeper of Icamole. He lost the battle of May 20th, 1876 against General C. Fuero and as this engagement was supposed to decide his political fate, in his keen disappointment and rage he furnished the disgraceful exhibition of a general weeping over a lost battle.

When visitors, friends as well as strangers, gush over his military exploits, his statesmanship, patriotism and his generosity, then he thaws out and tears surge to his eyes and run over as a frozen pond melts and overflows in springtime.

When Captain Clodomero Cota was sentenced by

the military tribunal to be shot, his father sought the president, and on his knees, weeping, begged him to pardon his son. Porfirio Diaz also was weeping, but lifting the despairing man, uttered this ambiguous phrase; "Have courage and faith in justice." The father left consoled, believing his petition had been answered. But on the following morning his son was shot. The tears of Porfirio Diaz are crocodile tears.

What is even stranger in the make up of this moral and intellectual chameleon is his sense of humor, which according to the stories in circulation is very keen and to the point.

When General Escobedo was imprisoned, his friend complained to the President about the want of deference toward this political victim, who was the most talented military man during the war of Intervention and of the Empire and an honor and a glory to his country. "Yes" mused the President "I agree with you and my greatest wish is to see him in the Hall of Fame." Knowing the fate of the other ambitious generals one can appreciate this weird jest all the better.

The president's son-in-law came late to lunch several times at the castle of Chapultepec. The third time when he was still accusing his automobile of being responsible for his lateness, the president said: "Don't you know that the automobile requires gasoline and not alcohol to run it properly." Mrs. A Tweedy once asked the President how he conceived the first inspiration to become president. Porfirio Diaz, innocent like, answered "I never did—I just drifted into the position I now hold, and I often wonder how it ever came about." This is a classic piece of humor and qualifies Porfirio Diaz as candidate for the presidency of the Ananias Club.

It is highly entertaining to see this unscrupulous despot who "did all that in him lay, to live and strive without moral principle" sermonizing prominent men so as to bring them down a peg or two when they get too bumptious or conceited.



As a Latin-American politician Porfirio Diaz has established a standard and created a school. The larger and more enlightened republics, Brazil, Chile and Argentina do not copy his methods, their government being an oligarchy tempered by democracy; but the heads of the smaller and more backward states, Cabrera in Guatemala, Zelaya in Nicaragua, Castro in Venezuela and Reyes in Colombia are his slavish imitators. The last mentioned, Reyes even thought it worth while to spend a year visiting Diaz to get his methods at first hand.

Let us make a hurried survey of Porfirio Diaz's work as a statesman. In the beginning of his power he prepared for the recognition of his unconstitutional tenure of office by acknowledging the English, French and American claims or debts; this was certainly a master stroke, for it enabled him to make more loans, in the fashion of the man who pays his \$5 debt to be able later to borrow \$20. He divined or followed the axiom of Baron Louis: "A state desiring credit, must pay everything, even its blunders."

His next move was the cultivation of amicable relations with the United States. This policy not only strengthened him abroad but also rendered impossible the revolutions at the border. To continue untrammelled as the Lord and Master at home he played an intricate game of political chess, even cheating when the opponent was not watching, till in the end there were left on the board—a king, a queen and a few pawns.

His ambition and the elimination of all his rivals concentrated all their power in his hands, As Bulnes says somewhere that a chaste and pure girl left alone in a room with ten satyrs would be perfectly safe, since these would be busy with fighting among themselves but the danger would come were she left alone with one satyr. So Mexico can be compared to a beautiful girl who remained pure and free as long as several political satyrs fought among themselves for possession of her, but when Diaz came along and destroyed one by one,

in succession, all his ambitions and lustful rivals, the nation then lost her purity and freedom and became his slave and prostitute.

In other words Porfirio Diaz has done his enslaving, corrupting, unpatriotic work so thoroughly that Mr. Iglesias Calderon voiced the sentiment of many a Mexican patriot when he said: "Without liberties we run a more shameful danger than the dismemberment of our country by force of arms, namely the treacherous division of it by those who will barter the love of country for the love of liberty," and as Don Nicamor Bolet Peraza says: "The great danger for the Hispano-American countries does not consist in the colossal military power of the United States, but in its admirable liberal political system which makes the conditions of an American citizen so enviable to us." (1)

The political mistakes of Porfirio Diaz include his indifference to the question of immigration, as by this time an influx from Europe would have been a great check against American Pacific conquest and Yankee aggression. His impotence to take this great Latin-American problem by the horns is proved by the small number of Europeans in Mexico, and the comparatively large number (about 65000) of Americans now living there. For "the question of immigration for Mexico as well as for Chile, Brazil and Argentina is a question of life and death; to forget it is sooner or later to invite destruction." (2)

His lack of patriotism is also shown in his utter indifference to the educational question. The percentage of illiteracy in Mexico reaches the astonishing number of 84%.

Another great blunder was the failure of Porfirio Diaz to cut the Gordian knot of Central American politics.

The lucky circumstance that the progress of Mexico went hand in hand with the increasing fame of Porfirio

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(1) Rectificaciones historicas F. Iglesias Calderon Pag. 75 Vol. 1.

(2) F. Bulnes, El futuro de las naciones Hispano Americanas.

Diaz induced the superficial student of Mexican politics into the belief that the president was solely responsible for all the benefits accruing from this wonderful prosperity. But Diaz and the clique which reflects his ideals, are short sighted, puny, self-sufficient, petty and local politicians, without any patriotic ideals; they are only big frogs in a little pond.

The Central American question which should have been solved ten years ago, remained in the air, not because General Diaz wanted peace in Mexico but because he was afraid and was too old to fight. Ten years ago he was 68 years old and therefore physically incapacitated to successfully lead a campaign against Guatemala; if he had sent another general to head the expedition, in case of a victory Porfirio Diaz would have lost his prestige and power.

Porfirio Diaz is not a military man in any sense of the word. He is more of a political affinity, a lilliputian imitation of Cardinal Richelieu, ruling an impassive king, which in his case is the Mexican nation. He has all the sinuous, treacherous, underhand methods of the militant prelates of the 12th century.

The account of his campaigns do not prove him to be either a great strategist or a great tactician. He was only a "beau sabreur", with as much strategical ability as was required by a robber chief and his band to attack and destroy a heavily armed and protected conyoy.

His fame as a general is another snowball which was rolled down the mountain of Mexican military exploits by his official flatterers; it became a formidable avalanche which at the bottom of the valley, under the searching rays of history will melt into a shallow, dirty puddle.

According to his official admirers he has won 41 battles, actions or engagements, he possesses moreover 14 government decorations and 13 foreign decorations, among which is the first class order of the Liberator from Venezuela.

The longer he stays in power, the more battles he

seems to be winning; they increase with amazing rapidity. I can imagine the faithful and useful millionaire valet, Colonel Pablo Escandon, stepping into the sanctum of the chief, hand to forehead, heels joined together in military fashion, reporting: "General, I beg to inform you that you have won another battle" "Which one?" says General Diaz. And then the glad tidings are bruited abroad and jotted down on the official roll of honor.

The battles of the 5th of May, 1862 and of the 2nd of April, 1867 which are officially celebrated as great victories of Porfirio Diaz, were never won by him. The battle of the 5th of May was won by General Zaragoza, and the action of the 2nd of April was forced on the council of war by a civilian, Justo Benitez, his secretary; the organization of this assault was made by General Alatorre and Porfirio Diaz came into action at the tail end of the engagement. The battle of Tecuac which decided the fall of the Lerdo government was won by the timely arrival of General Gonzalez.

What is left then to this hero of a thousand and one battles? Only two bloody actions: the massacre of Vera-Cruz and the carnage of Orizaba, victories, worthy of him, which will be inscribed in bloody letters in his pantheon of immortality.

We have seen his work as a statesman, patriot and as general and we stand amazed at the impudence of this misappropriated and plagiarized political and military fame, unheard of in the annals of history, and verily we can say with Bulnes that the only marvellous things in Latin-America are the lies.

Porfirio Diaz is old now, almost 80 years old, too old to continue with usefulness and dignity in the chair of state. Although de facto a Czar he was fain to be called president, for the title of Emperor in Mexico has a sort of hoodoo attached to it. Three Emperors were killed in Mexico, Montezuma, Iturbide and Maximilian.

The days of the Czar of Mexico are numbered; he is slipping fast into decrepitude, physical and mental.

He is like the wolf who became the head of the pack and kept his supremacy by the strength of his teeth; the day the other wolves discover that their chief has become toothless they tear him to pieces. And so it might happen with Porfirio Diaz.

Now he is only a stuffed lion, a giant with clay feet, and he could be pushed over with the little finger into the ash-heap. And when he dies—God bless his soul—with him will die the last political bandit in Mexico.



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We know<sup>1</sup> what<sup>2</sup> we are, but know not what we may  
be.

HAMLET. ACT IX. SCENE V.

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## The Central American Question.

American influence in the isthmus of Panama has modified the whole status of Central American politics. It has cast over the entire strip from the Rio Grande to the Chagres River the shadow of the American eagle. Events which formerly passed unnoticed, are now scrutinized with attention and an eye to their bearing on the future.

The whole situation of Central America is resting on a flimsy basis, like an argument with a false premise. The five Central American republics have no more business to be independent of one another than the 27 states of Mexico and the 46 states in the American union would have.

In 1821 all the five ancient provinces of Spain formed the Mexican federation which persisted up to the fall of Iturbide (11th of May, 1823) which then again separated with the exception of Chiapas which remained with Mexico. Ever since, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have always been warring against one another or getting up internal revolutions; and for a space of ninety years there has not been one year of peace in the Central American isthmus, except in Costa Rica which is rightly called the Switzerland of America. From 1821 till 1885 the struggle centered around Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua against Guatemala, which aspired to, and achieved the material and moral sovereignty over the rest. But in 1885 at the death of her President, Rufino Barrios, at the battle of Chalchuapa, Guatemala lost her supremacy, although she still exerts an isolated influence alternatively over Salvador and Honduras. Nicaragua on that date, not only recovered her moral independence, but began aspiring to be the pivot of a movement favoring a federal union of the five states.

As a matter of fact a Central American federation is an impossibility, owing to the difficulty of creating a purely federal army, because of the intense rivalry among the respective governments which unfits them for an "entente cordiale", and because it is a conflict of personalities and a competition between unscrupulous grafters.

The whole political situation of the last ten years has been reduced to a personal struggle between the President of Guatemala, Cabrera, and the President of Nicaragua, Zelaya. They have both protected all sorts of revolutionary schemes by the rebel exiles from the other republics.

Zelaya, a doctor in medicine, educated in Paris, is energetic and intelligent; Cabrera a lawyer, is not inferior to him either in talent or will power; moreover the latter's cunning and boldness are recognized even by his enemies. It will easily be seen that such men are not anxious to merge their supreme power into an ideal federation, since that would mean the loss of exclusive monopolies and schemes for personal enrichment.

During the twelve years that Cabrera has been in power he has amassed a fortune of many millions of dollars, thanks to the business enterprise of his partner, a German-American Jew who gets a rakeoff on every bag of coffee that leaves the country and who tried to hold up the Pan-American railroad for \$1,500,000 gold for the concession that the other states had granted freely. Nor are all these ill-gotten gains invested in the states from which they have been drained; Cabrera owns a fine hotel in Hamburg; Zelaya sends his wife abroad every year, ostensibly to get new clothes in Paris, but in reality with a bag of gold to place in European banks. Verily to be President in Central America is to be a cross between a bandit and the executive of a huge department store.

The struggle would have been endless without the intervention of the United States and Mexico. It always begins with the romantic formula "right is might"

and will end by armed intervention. The United States cannot but favor the absorption of Central America by Mexico, and this would have come about ten years ago but for the policy of Porfirio Díaz which has always been inert, cowardly and procrastinating.

In 1898 when there was danger of war between Guatemala and Mexico, the state of Jalisco offered, single-handed, with her own resources and men to fight the former, and had the offer been accepted, Jalisco would have succeeded, as it is the richest and most populous of the Mexican states.

Since Guatemala's geographical position makes her the key to the isthmus her annexation to Mexico will end the chaotic state of affairs in Central America, for then Mexico will control Honduras and Salvador and therefore also Nicaragua.

Two Spanish journalists Segarra and Julia, who made a trip from the Panama canal to the city of Mexico, reported their experiences in lectures, newspaper articles and books. They are agreed upon the fact that railroad communications will help toward peace more effectually than alliances or peace conferences. The great work of pacification is being achieved by the Pan-American railroad, a great deal of the success of which is due to the efforts and diplomacy of its vice-president Mr. Neelan.

Annexation which is the paramount issue will be taken up again after the death of Porfirio Diaz and the Mexican president or general who will solve it satisfactorily, will not only be the most popular man in his country but will also make history in Central America.

## **The Last Mexican Massacre.**

**VELARDENA AFFAIR PROVED TO BE WANTON SLAUGHTER BY OFFICERS OF DIAZ\***

New light upon the killing of unarmed and unresisting Mexican citizens in the little town of Velardena, not far from the city of Torreon, has at last aroused all Mexico, and, in spite of the fact that the native press is in deadly fear of telling the whole story, much truth has leaked out showing that Diaz is as bloodthirsty in his method of rule as was the last Sultan of Turkey.

The people of Velardena were holding a fiesta and marching in procession when the local police attempted to disperse them. Not succeeding in completely cowering the populace, the troops were sent for, with the following result, as described in the "Mexican Herald" of June 13, 1909:

"When the forces sent from Durango, comprising seventy men of the Second Platoon, arrived at Velardena, under command of Captain J. M. T., and of the state gendarmes under the command of Commandante O. M., all under the command of Lieutenant Colonel G. G., the town was pacified. A detachment of rurales had already arrived from Lerdo, commanded by Corporal A. C., and the Cuencueme forces at the command of Chief of Police L. E.

"In spite of the fact that the tumult was all over, G. G., according to an important witness, was not satisfied in taking mere precautionary measures, but made the statement that he had not made the trip as a wild goose chase and that it would never do to return to Durango without shooting somebody. So he commanded that he be shown a list of the principal disturbers. From this list he selected Alejandro Murguia, Antonio Reyes, Nabor Rocha, Felipe Flores, Doroteo

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\*This Chapter was added in July, 1909 after a careful revision of this book.

Hernandez, Isabel Arellano, Francisco Avitia, Jose Nava, Bonificio Gonzales, Aurelio Cruz, Simon Lopez, Alberto Perales, Sebastian Morales, Agapito Contreras, and Pedro Madero, and commanded that they be shot as traitors, from the back.

"The first four were executed by the state gendarmes commanded by Commandante M. and the remainder were shot by a squad at the command of Chief of Police E.

"The executions were most horribly bloody. With their arms tied behind them, they were shot in the most cruel manner, and some of them were thrown into ditches dug for their interment and buried alive. The bloody instinct of E. showed itself in its most revolting form when he shot one poor fellow at less than an arm's length, and while the miserable victim groaned in agony threw him into the ditch by his feet.

"Captain Jose Maria Tello refused to obey the orders of Colonel G. unless they were written. G. refused to write the order and insisted on Tello carrying it out. At that point Tello energetically refused, saying he would be shot himself before he would carry out the order.

"An important witness was Corporal Antonio Cavillo. He said that when he arrived everything was quiet. Nevertheless Colonel G. G. said that it would be impossible to return without doing something. Following this idea he had Commandante M. take a list of the names of all the disturbers, and taking the list, marked at random the names of those to be shot, with a red pencil.

"Before the execution M. went in search of grave diggers to prepare the ditches in which to throw the victims."

## The Financial System.

The "Cientificos" —A financial camarilla.

Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse.

PROVERBS.

The financial system of a nation is logically an offshoot of the political game; it is the top of the pyramid, which cannot exist without the basis. If the government be personal the financial department cannot be anything but personal. Although Gaudin said that the finances of a nation were governed by the same principles as those of private individuals, there comes a time when a finance minister who has been too long in power unconsciously feels that the national treasury is almost his private property and he finances accordingly.

For the last two decades we have heard nothing but praise about the finance minister of Mexico, and of course he has been called the greatest finance minister in the world. For the last sixteen years he has dictated the financial policy of Mexico without interference from a slavish Congress or even a board of directors, but has only been responsible to Porfirio Diaz, who, without fear of contradiction, has been as great a financial genius as Abdul Hamid.

The President is always busy playing his little political game but always with one eye to the treasury, knowing or divining instinctively that only a full treasury can pay for a well equipped army, efficient police force and 12,000 rurales which keep him in power at the polls with the help of the glitter of bayonets.

That the credit of Mexico has risen in an extraordinary manner is an undeniable fact and it can be said truthfully that for the first time that country has achieved real credit in the nation as well as abroad.

The settlement of the public debt imposed itself

on Mexico as an imperative necessity, as otherwise it would have been impossible to create a treasury and assure the credit of the nation. President Jaurez tried to bring about a settlement of the debt in 1870, but his project was refused by the bond holders of the English debt. President Lerdo likewise tried it, but without success. In 1880 Porfirio Diaz had succeeded in getting up another project which was pigeon-holed on account of the accession to power of President Gonzalez. The latter also attempted the settlement of this famous debt, but it did not come to a head until June 23d, 1886, when General Mena in conjunction with the English bond-holders agreed to a settlement of the debt.

The credit of Mexico not only started from that date but it was the beginning of a series of loans which increased in arithmetical progression. The result was that the appetites increased with the large profits. The salaried press tried to prove that the larger the debt of a nation the greater its credit and welfare; that these debts were a guarantee of peace, for then the nations who were the creditors would be interested that peace should continue and that the country should be developed. Like Ouvrard, Porfirio Diaz and J. Y. Limantour imagined "credit as multiplying wealth. Enthusiastic about the instrument without understanding its original function, they believed credit to be a means of creating riches, without realizing that work only is productive and that credit is only a tool of transmission which helps in the formation of wealth, credit being incapacitated in itself to originate it." (1)

The government tried to prove that all the money invested in public improvements reverted to the national treasury in geometrical progression, and that in this simple manner the debt would pay itself off without increasing the taxes. So much was said and repeated by the authorities in Mexico, in Europe and in the United States that the Mexican government and, especially, the minister of finance ended by convincing themselves

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(1) Portraits of financiers. A. Liesse

that they were cleverer and keener than the most talented bankers and financial men in the world. If an idiot were to tell you the same story every day for a year, you would end by believing him.

On December 13, 1887, Congress gave submissively the authorization for a loan of £10,500,000. On the 4th of May, 1890, the Executive was empowered to consolidate and exchange the subventions accredited to some railroad enterprises. In virtue of this the government dealt in a two-fold manner: first with the companies who were creditors, and secondly with the representatives of the different banking houses which had presented propositions to the President. The government decided in favor of Baron Bleichroeder with a loan of £6,000,000. The price of sale was  $88\frac{3}{4}\%$  and the interest was fixed at  $6\%$ .

In May, 1893, the Executive asked for authorization to finish the settlement of the debt by means of operations convenient for this purpose. Limantour was then minister of finance.

In 1893-94 new loans were contracted which had as their object the settlement of the aforementioned debt. They contained certain clauses which permitted the emission of titles or bonds for £2,500,000 for the purpose of settling and consolidating the floating debt contracted on account of the failure of the crops for two consecutive years, as well as the lowering of the price of silver. The sum was increased to £3,000,000 so that the Executive could dedicate a part of the new bonds to rescind the contracts with the mint and to conclude the national railroad of Tehuantepec. With the aforementioned authorization the emission of a loan of £3,000,000 at  $6\%$  payable every three months, was contracted with for Bleichroeder and the Banco Nacional of Mexico. In 1898 another loan was called for with bonds at  $5\%$ ; this loan was guaranteed by the turning over of  $62\%$  of the Custom House receipts. In 1904 another loan was contracted of \$40,000,000 at  $4\%$ , nominally as bonds, which were sold at  $95\%$ , interest to be paid



on it at 4.49%. Finally in 1908 another loan was called for \$50,000,000 for the sake of encouraging irrigation and immigration.(?)

From all this, it results that the actual debt of Mexico amounts to over \$400,000,000. It is an inheritance which will be left to the nation by the paternal government of President Diaz and is the least of the evils which he shall have to account for when God shall recall him.

And, nota bene, all this has been done, not in times of financial difficulties for the country, but while the income of the nation was increasing year by year.

Year	Income	Expenses
1885-86	\$27,810,909.....	\$38,903,353.
1886-87	\$31,168,352.....	\$31,536,205.
1887-88	\$33,932,226.....	\$36,270,451.
1888-89	\$34,334,783.....	\$38,572,239
1889-90	\$38,486,601.....	\$36,765,906.
1890-91	\$37,391,804.....	\$38,439,488.
1891-92	\$37,474,879.....	\$38,377,364.
1892-93	\$37,692,293.....	\$40,367,047.
1893-94	\$40,211,747.....	\$44,634,739.
1894-95	\$43,943,699.....	\$45,610,279.

In the fiscal year 1895-96 the revenue of the nation increased to \$50,521,470. In 1902-03 they were \$76,000,000; in 1907-08, \$114,286,122. In 1895-96 the first surplus amounted to \$1,113,046, increasing with the years. On June 30, 1903, the reserve funds formed by these surpluses exceeded \$30,000,000.

Last year, the first year of the panic, they admitted a deficit of 20 million dollars; this year it will be 40 millions.

The principal resources of the government are their revenue established by an almost prohibitory tariff and the product of the burdensome stamps revenue from which is derived one-third of the income and which gravitates principally upon foreign capital, so that the day this foreign capital does not invest into Mexico there

will be an enormous financial unbalance, a famine will follow and a panic such as no other country has ever had. Then the wisecracks who now praise the genius of the minister of finance will be convinced that his system is archaic, primitive, dangerous and deceitful.

In the last 25 years the rents of the houses have increased 200%. Rice has increased its price 200%, sugar beans, corn and all the staples have gone up from 125 to 250%. At the same time the salaries are about the same as they were 25 years ago.

What is the financial genius of Mexico going to do with an increasing deficit? Cover it up with more loans? The situation in Mexico is similar to that of the man who has turned over the management of his house to an expert, who under the pretext of improvements has borrowed money on the value of the house so that by the time the owner wants to get into possession of his property he finds that it does not belong to him any more but to the owners of the mortgages. Likewise, Mexico has been mortgaged to the foreign bankers who at the death of Porfirio Diaz will own everything that is worth having.

If the President could live another fifty years he might possibly crawl out of the present financial crisis, but as this is out of the question, he entertains the idea of a continuation of his system by men of his own creation who, having enriched themselves under his rule, would keep a tight lid on all the unsavory deals of the past 25 years.

The "cientificos," led by the minister of finance, have trailed the President in his financial raids like a pack of "coyotes" in the wake of a wolf out hunting. There is no business transaction of any magnitude, no organization of any bank or trust company, nor the selling of a mining or any concession of any importance in which these scientific grafters have not had a share, nor is there a profitable business which they do not turn into a monopoly. The manufacture of paper was turned by them into a monopoly so that they might keep their

power as a sword of Damocles over the helpless newspaper editors. Once upon a time an American asked for a concession to manufacture dynamite, which is used extensively in mining. He also asked for a tariff rate of \$200 a ton so as to protect his manufacture. But he never did turn out a single pound of dynamite but imported it all at a cost of 30 to 40 dollars a ton which in his turn he sold to the consumer in Mexico at the rate of \$200 a ton. One of the powerful científicos was backing the American.

When the Mexican Meat and Packing Co. started building slaughter houses and sold refrigerated meat in Mexico, the rival houses did not go out of business as was expected.

They invoked the aid of a powerful minister of finance who informed the president of the meat packing company that he had changed his mind about the exemption of taxes and that he would extend part of this exemption over a period of 20 years if the meat packing company would buy up all the slaughter houses in Mexico City. The president of the corporation understood the hint and asked for the price of sale. He had carefully priced all the rival slaughter houses and his figure with a large margin of profit was half a million dollars. Imagine his consternation when the minister gently broke the news to him: Two millions and a half dollars. The mayor of the city and some of the other científicos were in the deal.

Every científico is like a bridge that foreign investors must cross sooner or later to get any concession of any value. When there is a big law suit on hand (the científicos being mostly lawyers) one of them reluctantly takes up the case, and wins it in exchange for a very fat check. Any reform of the monetary or banking system or of the tariff or anything connected with money matters is put into the hands of a científico whose greed is "as insatiable as the eyes of man, the belly of a goat or the hands of a monkey."

They are a well drilled, clever, unscrupulous dis-

ciplined and tireless phalanx which swoops down on everything which smells of money as mice when attracted by the odor of cheese.

When they cannot turn out an honest penny, they lend it out at an interest which would make an Amsterdam money lender blush in shame. The mayor of a large city offered to lend money to the president of a newspaper at 60% a year. Most of the banks in Mexico are in the control of the científicos and they lend money at the rate of 15% and sometimes 18% a year.

But the end of all this grafting is nearing and many of the científicos and their associates are selling their chattels and shifting their bank accounts to European banks, following the lead of their chief, imitating thus the rats who leave the ship as soon as it begins taking water.

The people of Mexico who patiently curbed their necks under the ruthless and maleficent yoke of the Czar while there was work, food and good times, have finally awakened to a sense of consciousness through the pangs of hunger. For the first time in 30 years there is an open and defiant opposition to the reelection of the President, as the Mexicans realize that the financial camarilla cannot be removed without the elimination of the Czar himself.

There are already ominous signs of general unrest in the usually obedient press, at public meetings, in the army and in the organization of anti reelectionist clubs all over the country. The whole nation is seething like a mighty cauldron and a deep and reverberating rumbling is heard as before an earthquake. When the storm comes Porfirio Diaz and his camarilla will meet the same fate as that of Abdul Hamid and his eunuchs. But they will not take notice but will go on madly, greedily unconscious of their fate, for the Gods first make mad those whom they wish to destroy.

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